THE CILAPPATIKARAM

Prof. V. R.

Ramachandra Dikshitar, M.A.,

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THE CILAPPATIKARAM



TRANSLATED
WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES By
Prof V R RAMACHANDRA DIKSHITAR, M A

WITH FOREWORD BY

JULES BLOCH

AND

Prof K R SRINIVASA IYENGAR

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THE SOUTH INDIA SAIVA SIDDHANTA WORKS
PUBLISHING SOCIETY, TINNEVELLY, LIMITED
1/140, PRAKASAM SAALAI, MADRAS-600 001.
1978

Branches:

Tirunelveli-6 Madurai-1

Coimbatore-1 Kumbakonam-1

Tiruchirappalli-2

Ed 1 1939

Ed 2 (Kazhagam) January 1978

Publication No. 1673

THE CILAPPATIKARAM

Appar Achakam, Madras-1. (1/-)

TO THE MEMORY OF

PROFESSOR M. A. CANDETH

AND

PRINCIPAL REV. FR. F. BERTRAM, S.J.

FOR THEIR ABIDING INTEREST IN AND LOVE OF SOUTH INDIAN CULTURE

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Tamil Studies have become popular among the non- Tamils, especially in foreign countries. Many Univer- sities in the United States, a few in U.K., U.S S.R., France and some other European Countries teach Tamil for their departments. In countries like Sri Lanka and Malaysia a large number of Tamils live. The Universities in these Countries are also engaged in the development of Tamil Studies. Within India some of the North Indian Universities have started teaching Tamil to non-Tamils.

These circumstances compel the Tamils to publish the cream of their literature in other languages, particularly in English, which is widely accepted as the leading International language.

In this context it has become essential that many more books should be brought out in English on Tamil language, literatures etc., Many Tamil scholars have made some fruitful attempts to translate a few Tamil Classics into English.

Pioneer attempts were made by the foreign Mis- sionaries and scholars like Dr. G. U. Pope, Rev. Beschi, F. W. Ellis, H. Stokes, Rev. H. Bower and others in bringing out the English version of Tamil Works.

V. R. Ramachandra Dikshatar, former Professor of History, University of Madras, planned to bring out a few translations of Tamil works. He had translated Tirukkural and Cilappatikaram into English. Cilap- patikaram was first published by the Indian branch of the Oxford University Press, by Humphrey

Milford in

1939 and has been long out of print. His enthusiastic son Thiru. R. Srinivasan, B. E. with his mother's consent kindly permitted us to bring out the present edition and our thanks are due to both of them.

We are highly indebted to Prof. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, Retd. Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University and the Acting-President of the Sahitya Akademi, for the valuble Foreword he has written to this edition.

We hope all those interested in Tamil Studies will welcome this edition.

The Publishers.

FOREWORD

For the First Edition

JULES BLOCH
COLLEGE DE FRANCE, PARIS

I BELIEVE there is no need to introduce Mr V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar to the public, which knows him already and favourably. If, however, I have accepted the honour of writing a foreword to the present book, it is to lay stress on its special character, and to plead for more works of a similar nature.

Its significance will clearly appear if we follow the progress of the author's researches. At the start, as a research scholar in history, Mr Dikshitar devoted his first studies to the old Hindu administrative institutions; his ambition was to give a synthetic survey of them, including the theories of Kauṭalya and the traditional law-books, and also the actual practices of the sovereigns. Here, of course, Aśoka comes into prominence. Mr Dikshitar in this connexion happily considers, old Tamil institutions. But he finds this last-mentioned subject in itself worthy of further and deeper investiga-

tion; to quote Mr Dikshitar's own words, he 'felt more and more the need for an intrinsic study of the priceless literary treasures of Tamil'. Hence a set of essays which formed the basis of his useful book, *Studies in Tamil Literature and History* now in its second edition. Here general statements and hypotheses are not altogether lacking, and therefore the author does not completely escape from criticism.

But, happily, facts and an

analysis of contents find a large place, and there is a progressive disappearance of the historian behind the materials of history. In praising this book at the time, I regretted that instead of short notices of the contents, especially of the more archaic works, we were not also offered long or even complete translation. Now Mr. Dikshitar himself has come to that same necessary conclusion; the historian has resorted to the more difficult and often ungrateful, but also more beneficent, task of translation. Let the reader have the plainest possible access to the text; help him with all the needed current explanations, and reserve personal inductions for the introductory survey. This will be a boon not only to the student of history but also to the literary man and to everybody interested in Tamilian culture. And this means many people at a time when so much is being done, not only to assert India's culture before the world, but also to make India known to herself, and to show in their true light the various original civilizations which all together from Indian civilization.

Among them the Tamil country can boast of an antique and original culture. A picture of India, historical or literary, will not be complete if due importance is not attached to it;

description of India will be no more than a physical complete if rocky Deccan

and southern deltas or backwaters are omitted.

But how many are there who have access and are able to enjoy or usefully consult Tamil literary works,

especially the older ones? It is a matter of common

knowledge that only a few can do so even among those born in the Tamil country. On those few lies the responsibility of helping their compatriots to appreciate those works which are the particular glory and the in-

spiration of their country, and to give outsiders a faith- ful rendering of them.

Scholars themselves will be benefited by that work. Need I recall what progress in Sanskrit studies has been due to translations from Sanskrit into European langua- ges, and primarily into English ? And to those interested in furthering the cultural unity of India, need I recall that those periods of history when translations were most numerous were also periods of unification and progress ?

This is my plea, and the reason why I have great pleasure in recommending this present new departure of a historian.

Let me also take advantage of this opportunity to mention that already in 1900 Prof. Julien Vinson, in his *Legendes Bouddhistes*

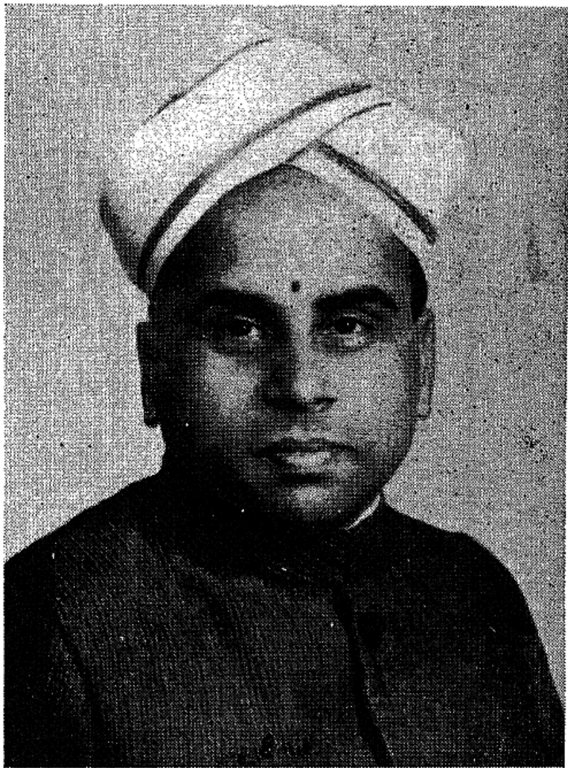
et D' Jains, rendered into French the analysis given by Mahamaho- padhyaya Swaminatha Aiyar of both the *Cilappati- kāram* and the *Maṇimēkalai* and added his own full translation of three cantos[1] of the former.

I could dilate longer on this and similar topics. Better do I invite readers to take advantage of this beautiful poem and treatise in its present garb, and com- patriots of Mr. Dikshitar to emulate him in translating fully as many old poems as possible, especially those of the Sangam, where there probably is still much to be discovered.

College de France
March 1939

1. Cantos xvi-xviii, and also *padikam*.

Jules Bloch



FOREWORD

For the Second Edition

Prof. K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

VICE-PRESIDENT, SAHITYA AKADEMI, MADRAS

When the first edition of the late V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar's close English prose rendering of *Cilappatikaram* appeared in 1939, it was immediately hailed as an invaluable aid to the study of ancient South Indian history and culture, and more particularly to the study of this foremost among the epics of classical Tamil literature. A professional historian

turning to

the study of literature, a historical researcher trying his

hand at the translation of an ancient Tamil poem into

modern English prose, an academic specialist lifting the

iron curtain between Ilango's immortal 'Epic of the

Anklet' and the great mass of modern (especially non-

Tamil) readers:

this was trebly an unusual phenomenon,

and evoked a ready

lovers of poetry alike.

welcome from historians and

People ofcourse had known vaguely for a long

time about the Tamil 'Sangam' classics, and the five

great epics: *Cilappatikaram*, *Manimēkalai*, *Jeevaka-Chintāmani*, *Kundalakēsi* and *Valaiyapati*; but it was only when Mahamahopadhyaya V. Swaminatha Aiyar- that Hero as scholar, literary sleuth and exegetist- brought out definitive editions of the first three (the remaining two are yet to be retrieved from their undeserved relegation to oblivion) and of the important Sangam classics that a serious study of classical Tamil

literature became possible. In course of time more and more scholars were lured to these classics, and there was thus witnessed a

diffusion of intelligent interest in *Cilappatikaram* and the other marvels of the Golden Age of Tamil literature. It was in this favourable climate that Ramachandra Dikshitar commenced his arduous and dedicated inquiries that were presently to bear fruit in his *Studies in Tamil Literature and History* and, not long after, his English translation of *Cilappatikaram*, with a comprehensive Introduction (almost of the size of a book) and numberless footnotes with an almost encyclopaedic range.

Nearly 40 years have passed since the publication of Dikshitar's translation, and it has been out of print for quite some time. In the interval *Cilappatikaram* has seen publication in popular as well as scholarly editions, and what was once a name, a hallowed memory, has now become a part of the popular culture of Tamil Nadu. Critical studies have appeared too,

and the linguistic, artistic, political, historical, geographical, social, legendary and mythological backgrounds have been researched with patience, perseverance and discrimination. A monograph in English on Ilango Adigal by the late M. Varadarajan has been published by Sahitya Akademi in their 'Makers of Indian Literature' series. Besides, Thiru M. P. Sivagnanam's discourses on *Cilappatikaram* from numberless public platforms have helped over a period of years to familiarise the story, the poem and the characters to his rapt audiences in Tamil Nadu. In the cumulative result, Ilango and Kannagi and Poompuhar are now integral to Tamil sensibility, and *Cilappatikaram* has come to hold a place in our affections on a par with the *Ramayana* story as sung by Kavichakravarti Kamban.

Nor is such interest or appreciation altogether con- fined to Tamil Nadu. It is now freely acknowledged that *Cilappatikaram* is among the supreme epics of the world, and its three-domed structure, the fiery purity and sublimity of the heroine, the startling shifts in scene and incident and character, the wide sweep of the action and the orchestrated grandeur of the whole have been admired by a choice of

as well.

critics outside Tamil Nadu

Ten years ago, the French scholar, Alain Danielou's new English translation of *Cilappatikaram* appeared in the West. It was a prose rendering in the main, but the more poetically effective passages in the original were turned (though not always very

successfully) into English verse. The book had a pleasant format, and there were hardly any footnotes; and being tailored to the requirements of a world audience, it was immediately readable and intelligible. Another English translation has just appeared, *The Anklet Story* by Ka Naa Subra- manyam, a well-known Tamil writer and scholar. Here too there is a mixture of verse and prose, but the rendering is rather closer to the original than Danielou's, though not as close as Dikshitar's.

And yet all translation is but a challenge and a trap, and often a terribly frustrating experience. While translations from one language into others are necessary in our multi-lingual world, translating poetry remains an almost impossible task. It is rather like the presen- tation of a play, about which Theseus makes this perceptive comment in *A*

Midsummer Night's Dream:

"The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them."

Every translation is an attempt at new creation, and although perfection may prove elusive, each can have distinctive merits of its own.

It is the merest truism to say that Kannaki is the heart and soul of *Cilappatikaram*. The name carries a magic glow, a talismanic charm, for the Tamils-but how exactly shall we understand her? Her

role is divi-
nely passive in Pukar, fiercely active in Madurai, and
transcendentally fulfilling in Vañci. Was she but the
merchant-prince Manaikkan's darling daughter–the in-
sulted and the injured, the enraged and the transfigured?

In the canto 'Vettuvavari' in the Book of Madurai,
Cālini the prophetess thus speaks about Kaṇṇaki in an
obviously inspired moment :

"இவளோ, கொங்கச் செல்வி; குடமலையாட்டி;
தென்றமிழ்ப் பாவை செய்தவக் கொழுந்து;
ஒருமா மணியாய் உலகிற் கோங்கிய

திருமா மணி...................."

This key passage is translated by Dikshitar as follows
(p. 206) :

"This is the lady of the Konkunatu,
the mistress of the Kutamalai (the western hills), the queen of the South Tamil country, and the sprout of her (Kannaki's) prior penance; she is *tirumamani* (literally, the bright jewel) far-famed as the peerless gem of the world".

Thus Alain Danielou (p. 78):

"She has come, the princess of the Kongunadu, the Tamils of the north, the sovereign of the western hills,
the queen of the southern Tamil
land! She is the flower of virtue, a matchless jewel crowning the Earth".

And thus Ka Naa Subramanyam (p. 73):

"Lady, Queen of Kongunadu,

Goddess of
human origin, she has come amidst us. She is the
Sovereign Queen of the western hills-she is queen
of all the southern lands. She is the present con-
sequence of the many meritorious acts of previous
lives. She is a rare jewel among the women of
the world, she is a Goddess among women...".

There is too much condensation in Danielou's, and too
much expansive paraphrasing in Ka Naa's; and even
Dikshitar has to do some explaining within the
brackets. In that seminal passage, Chalini in a vision
sees the past, present and future at once. Beyond the

present is the glorious future, itself a flowing from the past. Kannaki will be honoured in all three Tamil Kingdoms, and will eventually be worshipped as a jewel among women, a Goddess. But what was the reason for her birth in this "too too sullied" earth? Was it because of her own tapasya in her past lives? Or was it rather because the entire Tamil world-Mother Tamil herself-had aspired for such a descent of the Divine for redeeming the time and re-establishing Dharma? As the end result, not only the Tamils in the three regions, but the whole world itself was to benefit from the descent of the Divine as Kannaki and her

acceptance and deification as Pattini Teivam.

This sample from the three renderings is enough to show how difficult indeed is the job of translating an ancient Tamil poem into modern English. There will of course be no final or wholly satisfying English translation of *Cilappatikaram*, but I feel that Ramachandra Dikshitar's conscientious down-to-the-text prose rendering will always prove a dependable aid to both students

of history and poetry, and to the common reader as well.

Cliappatikaram is structured as a 'divine comedy', Kannaki's silent suffering in Pukar being followed by her agony and anger and purgation in Madurai, and culminating at last in her fulfilment and transcendence at Vañci. Music, dance and poetry-the market-place, the court, the burning city of purgation-the battle-field, the enshrinement, the apotheosis of the benediction : all mingle and fuse to give us an endearing and enligh- tening and inspiring portrait of a vanished age, which is also forever involved in our affections, memories and aspirations.

I heartily welcome this reissue of Ramachandra Dikshitar's monumental study and translation, and I hope it will be received with gratitude and delight by scholars in all parts of the world. The Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society have been among the most enterprising publishers in the South, and their mis-

sionary zeal and dedicated endeavours have helped to keep aloft the thousand-tongued Torch of Tamil litera- ture and culture. Their present publishing venture is of a piece with the rest, and deserves the widest possible acclaim.

Mylapore,
14 *July* 1977 }

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

PREFACE

SOME time after the publication of my book *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, in 1930, Mr F. J. Richards, formerly of the Indian Civil Service, wrote to me suggesting that I should undertake the writing of a handbook on the History of Tamil Literature. He also pointed out the desirability of publishing a series of critical editions of the Tamil classics with English translations and annotations. He wrote: 'I have no hesitation in pressing for English editions, for the reason that Tamil is almost a sealed book to all who are

not Tamilians, and it is a pity that the rest of India does not realize the importance of the Tamil contribution to Indian culture. We can only be made to do so by publishing for a wider circle of readers, and English is the most handy medium for this publicity both in India and elsewhere.' This letter of Mr Richards induced me to undertake the rather stupendous task of attempting an almost literal translation of the most difficult of Tamil classics, the *Cilappatikāram*

The translation is based on Mahamahopadhyaya Dr V. Swaminatha Aiyar's Tamil edition of the *Cilappatikāram*. I have to acknowledge my

indebtedness to this scholarly and critical work of the Mahamahopadhyaya. I have also derived immense benefit from Rao Sahib Pundit M. Raghava Aiyangar whom I have had to consult frequently in the course of preparing this work. My thanks are also due to several colleagues in the departments of the University and other friends who have been of help to me in one way or another.

To Professor Jules Bloch I acknowledge my parti- cular

indebtedness for the Foreword he has written.

I must also express my gratitude to the Madras School-book and Literature Society for their generous contribution towards the publication of the book.

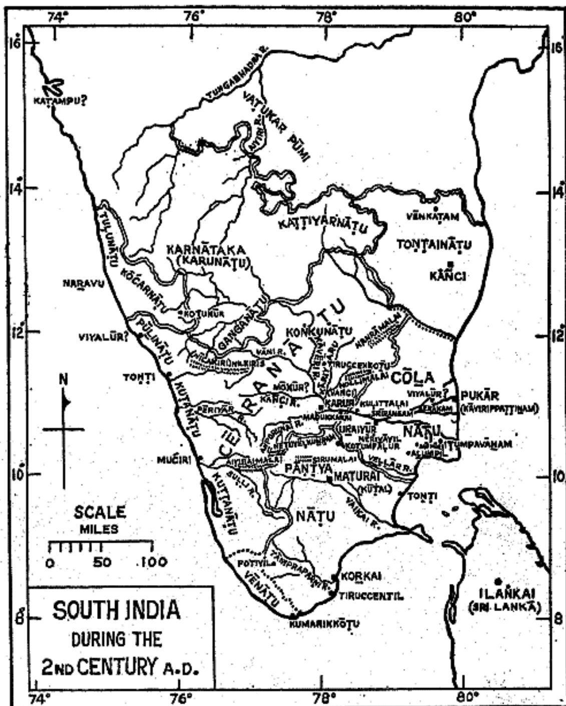
I shall feel my labour amply rewarded if the book helps to spread Tamil culture in India and abroad.

Madras
20 *April* 1939

V. R. RAMACHANDRA DIKSHITAR

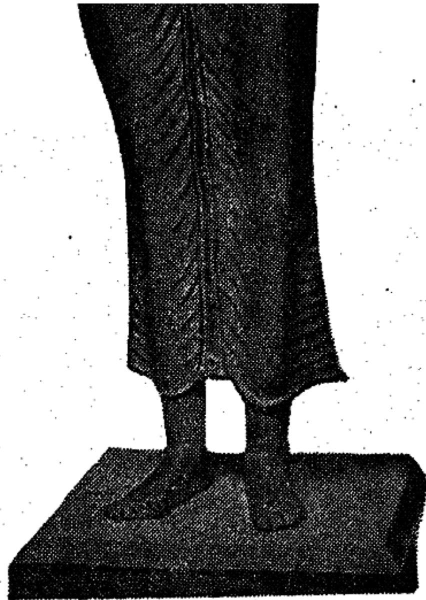
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SOUTH INDIA
DURING THE
2ND CENTURY A.D.





KAṆṆAKI

INTRODUCTION

I
THE NAME

The term *Cilappatikāram* is made up of two words, *Cilampu* and *atikāram*. Literally the title means 'the story that centres around a *cilampu* or anklet'. The hero and the heroine of the story, Kōvalan and Kannaki, set out for Madurai to dispose of a *cilampu* and thereby raise the capital needed to pursue a trade. In the bazaar street of Madurai Kōvalan meets the state goldsmith. The state goldsmith who has stolen the queen's anklet (similar to that in Kōvalan's hand) reports to the king that he has found the thief. The king blindly believes the goldsmith and has poor Kōvalan executed. The heroine proves to the king her husband's innocence by breaking open her other anklet and showing that the contents of

her anklets are different from those of the queen. The Pāṇṭiyaṉ king dies of grief on realizing his blunder in having ordered the execution of Kōvalaṉ without proper investigation.
Kaṇṇaki destroys the city of Madurai by fire to avenge the execution of her husband, and is finally proclaimed the goddess of chastity.
As the story thus centres round the *cilampu*, it can appropriately be named the Epic of the Anklet.

One among the five *peruṅkāppiyams* (*mahakavyas* of Sanskrit literature), the *Cilappatikāram* may come under the category of *toṭarnilaicceyyuḷ* and in it we find *iyal*, *icai*, and *nāṭakam* as its chief characteristics. *Iyal*, *icai*,

and *nāṭakam* mean, respectively, Literary Tamil, Music, and the Drama. There will be

no two opinions about the excellence of the literary Tamil of the epic; and as regards the other two characteristics, *icai* and *nāṭakam*, the work may be described as a model of ancient Tamil musical and dramatic composition. A wealth of material is found scattered throughout the work. One is struck with wonder at the *icaippāṭṭu* or the lyric songs in which the author not infrequently indulges. The songs of Kōvalan and Mātavi on the seaside (*kānalvari*) are full of lyric charm. Equally charming are the songs sung in honour of the deity at the Aiyyaikōṭṭam, the songs of the *āycciyar* (cowherdesses) in their *kuravaikkūttu*, and the songs of the hill-women in honour of Murukan (Subrahmaṇya).

Though *iyal* and *icai* are prominent in the pages of the work, the epic contains positive elements which go to make up a dramatic composition, with the result that it can also be styled, appropriately, a *nāṭakakkāppiyam*. Adopting the modern terminology for the

classification of dramatic literature, we may say that this epic is a tragi-comedy. The tragic elements preponderate in the story. The separation of Kaṇṇaki from her husband, her ominous dream, the equally fearful dream of Kōvalaṉ, the journey of the couple through wild forests, the unjust execution of Kōvalaṉ, and Kaṇṇaki's inconsolable distress, the Pāṇṭiyan's great grief at the injustice perpetrated by him, the plucking out by Kaṇṇaki of one of her breasts, the burning of the city, the death of the Pāṇṭiyan king and queen, are all tragic elements in the story. Notwithstanding these tragic elements which evoke the reader's sympathy and tears, the ending is happy. Both the wronged persons attain Heaven in a celestial car surrounded and celebrated by gods.

THE FORM

The form adopted is that of the *kāvya* or *kāppiyam* of Tamil literature. There are excellent descriptions of rivers like the Vaikai

and the Kāvēri, of cities like Pukār and Madurai, of forms of dancing like the *kuravaikkūttu*, of gods like Viṣṇu, of wild forests, of the celebration of marriages, etc., all affording data for reconstructing the ancient Tamil social life. Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ himself calls the work in his preface (*patikam*) *pāṭṭuṭaiceyyuḷ* or *uraiyiṭaiyiṭṭa pāṭṭuṭaiceyyuḷ*. This Tamil phrase is a free rendering of the Sanskrit term *campu*. Compositions like this contain at frequent intervals *uraippāṭṭu* (rhetorical prose). A good example of *campu* literature in Tamil is the *Pāratam* of Peruntēvaṉār.

II

THE STORY

In the fifties of the second century A.D. there lived in the city of Pukār, which was the capital city of the great Karikālaccōḻaṉ, two merchant princes who had respectively a son and a daughter. The son went by the name of Kōvalaṉ, and the daughter by that of Kaṇṇaki. At their respective ages of sixteen and twelve, their parents had them married

according to the fire-rites prescribed in Vēdic literature. Soon a separate establishment was set up for them and the young couple spent sometime together happily. One day when Kōvalaṉ was passing through the busy streets of Pukār, he happened to cast his eyes upon Mātavi, a charming courtesan of the city, who had just won her laurels from the king of the land. Kōvalaṉ having fallen in love with her, left his home and lived with the courtesan until he had wasted upon her the whole of his wealth. There then came the festival sacred

to Indra, the God of Heaven. All Pukār celebrated it with pomp and splendour. The lovers spent their evenings in the park on the seashore entertaining themselves with music. A song of Mātavi made Kōvalaṉ suspect that she had thoughts of another lover. This caused a change in his feelings towards her. With wounded pride he left her, as he intended, for good. He came home and opened his heart to his sorrow-stricken wife. He explained the circumstances he was in, and told her of his resolution to leave the city for Madurai to earn his livelihood. Kaṇṇaki who was a strict observer of the rules laid down for chaste wives, and who practised them to their very letter, welcomed the suggestion, and sought permission to follow him wherever he might go. He spoke to her of the difficulties of traversing, on foot forest belts and mountain-tracts full of wild animals and haunted by evil spirits bent on mischief. All this could not persuade her to stay at home. Her only desire was to share his weal and woe, and he finally assented to her earnest wish.

With Kaṇṇaki, whose only remaining jewels were the pair of anklets, he set out for Madurai early before daybreak so that no one might come to know of their whereabouts. His idea was to dispose of a *cilampu* in the bazaar at Madurai, and with the capital raised thereby to

set up some business. Kōvalan̲ and Kaṇṇaki passed along the northern bank of the Kāvēri towards the west and reached a grove. Here they met Kavunti, the celebrated woman ascetic doing penance, and bowed to her. She offered to accompany them and show them the right path to Madurai and they gladly accepted her kind offer. All the three crossed over to the southern bank of the Kāvēri by boat and reached Uraiyūr, the other capital of the Cōḻa kingdom.

Having stayed a day there, the three proceeded towards Madurai. On the way Kōvalan̲ met a certain Kaucikan̲ who was bringing a message of regret from Mātavi to Kōvalan̲. Kaucikan̲ communicated to Kōvalan̲ Mātavi's protestations of her love for him. But Kōvalan̲

sent the messenger to his own parents and asked him to deliver the same letter to them so that they might be relieved of their poignant distress at his secret departure.

Passing on, the couple and Kavunti reached the river Vaikai and crossing it by boat, they reached the outskirts of the city of Madurai. Here they came upon Mātari, a cowherdess of the city, to whom Kavunti introduced Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki. She was requested to accommodate them until Kōvalan was able to stand on his own legs. To this Mātari agreed, and the couple repaired to her cottage. Kavunti chose to stay outside the city

discussing questions of religion and philosophy with sages residing there.

Mātari left Kaṇṇaki in the company of her daughter Aiyai. Helped by Aiyai, Kaṇṇaki prepared dinner for herself and her husband of which the couple partook. Kōvalaṉ then took one of her anklets and went towards the bazaar to sell it. It was an inauspicious hour when he started, but of this he was not aware. In the bazaar he met the state goldsmith to whom he showed the anklet and offered to sell it for a fair price.

This goldsmith, who had stolen the queen's anklet sometime before, thought it a good

opportunity to accuse

Kōvalan of the theft of the queen's jewel and proclaim

himself innocent. He therefore readily consented to

Kōvalan's proposal, and leaving him in his cottage,

went post-haste to the palace, informed the king that

he had found out the thief who had stolen the queen's

anklet, and handed it over to the king. Without bestowing a moment's thought on the matter, the king ordered his executioners to behead the thief. Followed

by the goldsmith, the executioners came to the cottage

where Kōvalan was.
Moved by his innocent looks they hesitated at first to

carry out the king's order, until the goldsmith treated them to a lecture on the theory and practice of thieving. Thereupon one among the party of executioners, more cruel than his companions, beheaded Kōvalaṉ.

In the meantime Mātari, who noticed evil omens portending danger, arranged for a *kuravaikkūttu* in honour of Viṣṇu and Piṉṉai. The *kūttu* being over, Mātari went to the river for her bath. There she heard people talking about the slaughter of the innocent Kōvalaṉ. She shook with fear, ran home and informed her kith and kin. Noticing the sorrow-stricken faces, and hence feeling uneasy, Kaṇṇaki asked them to give her news of her husband. Though none of them had the heart to break

the shocking news, her persistence made one of them yield to her repeated entreaties. The rude shock, and the agony which she could hardly endure distracted her. She raved like a mad woman, fell down on the earth, rose up and sobbed aloud in anguish. Though it was late in the night she went to the bazaar to have a look at her husband. She found him in a pool of blood gushing out of his wounds. Her grief knew no bounds. She cried till she seemed to see Kōvalan̲ rise up to go to Heaven saying to her 'Stay here'.

She could no longer endure the wrong done to her innocent husband. All her grief was now turned into anger against the king.

She went to the palace and demanded proper justice at his hands. She narrated her case, proved by her other anklet how the one supposed

to have been stolen by Kōvalaṉ was hers and not the queen's, and showed how the goldsmith had deceived him. At this the just and repentant king fell into a swoon which ended in his death. It was no consolation to poor Kaṇṇaki whose innocent husband had been irretrievably wronged. She plucked out her left breast and threw it over the city cursing that the city be consumed by flames. The god of fire brought destruction to all

except the Brahman sages, cows, chaste women, children and the aged.
The guardian deity of Madurai at this time presented herself before Kaṇṇaki and narrated to her how in his previous birth Kōvalaṉ was Paratan, in the service of Vasu, king of Cingapura, who had killed an innocent merchant, Cangamaṉ by name, suspecting him to be a spy, and that was why he now had this fate. Asked as to Kaṇṇaki's future, the deity replied that on the fourteenth day from that hour she would go to Heaven invited by her husband in a celestial car.

Kaṇṇaki thereupon left Madurai and proceeding west to the Malaināḍu reached Murukavēl-kuṉram (the hill sacred to Murukā) which she ascended. There she stood under the shade of a *Vēnkai* tree to the wonder of the people of the place, most of whom were Kuṛavās. When every one of them was looking at her, Kaṇṇaki left the place in the celestial car for Heaven. This they reported to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, their king. The

poet Sāttaṉār, who was there, narrated the events that had happened in Madurai.

The queen desired that a temple should be set up in hon- our of Kaṇṇaki. Ceṅguṭṭuvaṉ who had been thinking for a long

time of leading a military expedition to the north to subdue the refractory chieftains there, resolved to secure a block of stone from the Himalayas to carve out an image of the Pattiṉikkaṭavuḷ as they called her. So he started on his northern expedition through the

Nilgiris.

In the meantime there was a famine in the Pāṇṭiyaṉ kingdom due to continuous drought. Iḷañceliyaṉ, the Pāṇṭiyaṉ at Korkai, offered a sacrifice of 1,000 goldsmiths to the Pattiṉikkaṭavuḷ, and the country had plentiful showers of rain. Hearing this, the kings of Koṅkumaṇṭalam, of Ceylon, and of Uṟaiyūr dedicated temples to Kaṇṇaki and instituted daily worship and the festivals. At this time, it may be noted, Gajabāhu was the king of Ceylon and Perunaṟkiḷḷi was the Cōḷā king at Uṟaiyūr.

After defeating the northern kings Kaṉaka and Vijaya, Seṅkuṭṭuvaṉ brought a stone from the Himalayas and after bathing it in the Ganges returned home. A temple was consecrated to the Pattiṉikkaṭavuḷ and was endowed for daily worship. The consecration ceremony was attended by eminent kings including those of Mālva and Ceylon. After this, on the advice of the Brahman Māṭalan, the king engaged himself in the performance of Yajnas or Vedic sacrifices and spent the evening of his life in peace and prayer.

III

ITS PLACE IN THE CAṄKAM WORKS

To find a way out of the tangled forest of South Indian chronology is a very intricate task. This is especially true of the Cankam works. The question of the dates of the Cankam works has been discussed.[1] Roughly speaking the Cankam epoch may be assigned to a period commencing with the fifth century B. C. and ending with the fourth century A. D. The *Cilappatikāram* belongs to this epoch and is an accredited Cankam work, as is also the other work of that class, the *Maṇimēkalai*.

1 V. R. R. Dikshitar *Studies in Tamil Literature and History*, *2nd ed., 1936*.

Both these belong to the category of the great Epics (*mahākāvyas*) of which five are distinguished. These twin epics, the *Cilappatikāram* and the *Maṇimēkalai*, can be likened in certain respects to the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, and are invaluable sources for re-construct- ing the history of the ancient Tamil land.

The date of the classic deserves an independent examination. This epic, which is very ancient in age, is quoted as an authority even by ancient commentators like the commentator of the *Iṟaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ* and Uraiyā- ciriyar (Iḷampūraṇar). In the use of choice words and in terseness of expressions the book is unrivalled. Yet the style is simple though polished. Ornate in

expression, it has also grace and simplicity. It has already been mentioned that this epic is a treatise on the threefold classification of the Tamil language — Literary Tamil, Music and the Drama. Beginning with the drama, we have *uraippāṭṭu* or rhetorical prose compositions. The varied forms of musical composition such as *kāṉalvari* (sea-song), *vēṭṭuvavari* (hill-song), *āṟṟuvari* (river-song), *ūcalvari* (song to accompany swinging), and *kantukavari* (song sung by girls while playing with balls) are worthy of note in the pages of the work. The distinguishing traits of the literary Tamil—*veṇpā* and *akavaṟpā* or *akaval* —are prominently seen. Of all the metres used in the poem, *akavaṟpā* or blank verse is the metrical form most frequently used.[1] Thus the *Cilappatikāram* is an excellent example of *ilakkiyam* or Tamil poetry. It may be noted in this connexion that the early works on music and drama have been lost beyond recovery. The *Cilappati- kāram*

may, however, be said to represent in a way the earlier musical and dramatic pieces. It thus takes a

1 *Cita.*, preface p. 9; *Tolk.* 'Ceyyul', the gloss of Iḷam- pūraṇar on *sutra* 157.

legitimate place among the extant Caṅkam works and is very valuable to the historian of South India. But the most conclusive argument in respect of the epic's place in the Caṅkam category is that the friend and companion of the author of the *Cilappatikāram*, Kūlavāṇikaṉ Cīttalai Cāttaṉār, is a Caṅkam celebrity. And this Cāttaṉār is the reputed author of the *Maṇimēkalai*, which is a continuation of the theme contained in

the *Cilappatikāram*. A futile attempt has recently been

made to prove that these epics were post–Caṅkam works.[1]

But this militates against the fact that the author of

the *Maṇimēkalai* belonged to the same age as poets like Paraṇar[2] and Kapilar. We know that these two are among the most distinguished names mentioned in connexion with the traditional third Caṅkam. This, above all, assigns to the *Cilappatikāram* a rank among the Caṅkam works.

One conclusive evidence for the second century A. D. as the date of the *Cilappatikāram* is the complete silence of the epic with regard to the Pallavas of Kañci. This epic as well as the *Maṇimēkalai* speaks of Kañci in more than one place, but does not mention anywhere the Pallavas themselves or any of their

kings. The earliest of the Pallava charters—the records in Prakrit—are three in number: the Mayidavolu plate, the Hirahadagalli plates, and the British Museum plates. These have been published in the volumes of the *Epigraphia Indica*, and range over a period *circa* A. D.

1 E.g. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar's *History of the Tamils*, ch. XXIX; K. N. Sivaraja Pillai's *The Chronology of the Early Tamils*, p. 42. The latter says that he is mainly guided by the literary test.

2 For Paraṇar's reference to Ceṅkuṭṭuvan see *Patiṟṟ.*, fifth Ten; *Puṟam.*, st. 369; *Akam.*, st. 212, etc.

200-350. This means that we have inscriptional evi- dence of the early Pallavas and the earliest of them could be dated from A.D. 200.[1] The evidence of Caṅ- kam literature shows that, up to the occupation of the city by the Pallavas, Kañci was one of the northern outposts of the Cōḻā kingdom, and was the capital of the Cōḻā Viceroy. In the age of the *Cilappa- tikāram* the Cōḻā Viceroy was Toṇṭamāṉ Iḷam-Tiraiyan celebrated in the *Perumpaṇāṟṟuppatai* by Uruttiraṅ Kaṇ- ṅaṉār. Iḷam-Tiraiyan was a chief of the Tiraiyar who preceded the Pallavas at Kañci, and who were subordi- nate to the Cōḻās in the second century A.D. Thus the *Cilappatikāram* which actually refers to Kañci, does not mention the Pallavas even indirectly, while sub-

sequent literature represented by the *Tēvāram* and the *Tivyaprapantam* often makes references to the Pallava kings. The inference is therefore conclusive that the Pallava kings came to reign at Kañci after the composition of the *Cilappatikāram*. Otherwise it is difficult to understand the silence of the epic and other Caṅkam works on the Pallavas or any member of that dynasty.[2]

IV
THE DATE OF CERAN CEṄKUṬṬUVAN

A stanza in the *Puranāṉūru*[3] and a few in the *Akanāṉūṟu*[4] compared with a reference in the *Cilappatikāram*[5]

show that the early history of the Cēras can be carried

1 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XV, pp. 246-55, 'Two Pallava Copper-plate Grants'. ed. H. Krishna Sastri.

2 R. Gopalan, *The Pallavas of Kāñci*, p. 9 ff.. (Madras University, 1928).

3 St. 2. 4 St 65, 168, and 233.
5 Canto xxiii, ll. 55-60.

back to an epoch before the Mahabharata war. For we hear of one Utiyañcēral, a Cēra king who acted as the host to the combatants of that war. An analytical study of the *Patirruppattu*, so far as the political data contained in it are concerned, furnishes us with ample material to reconstruct the chronology of the three ancient South Indian dynasties, and particularly that of the early Ceras. Of the Ten Tens (*Patirruppattu*), the first and the last have not been traced, and we must congratulate the talented editor, Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar, for presenting

us with the available eight Tens, all very important as preserving in a nutshell an account of the ancestry of the Cērā Kings, to whom these poems have been dedicated. The following is the list of kings as they occur in the *Patiṟṟuppattu*.

1. Imayavarampaṉ (also Kuṭavar Kōmāṉ and Kuṭakkō) Netuñcēralātaṉ
2. Palyanaic-celkeḻu-kuṭṭuvaṉ
3. Kaḷaṅkāykkaṇṇi Nārmuṭiccēralātaṉ
4. Kaṭalpiṟakkoṭṭiya Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ
5. Ātukōṭpāṭṭuccēralātaṉ
6. Celvakkaṭuṅkō-Vāḻiyātaṉ
7. Peruñceral-Irumpoṟai
8. Iḷañcēral-Irumpoṟai

As regards their relationship the following information is available from the epilogue attached to each of the respective eight Tens. Imayavarampan Neṭuñēcralātaṉ is the son of Utiyaṉcēral and

Veḷiyaṉ-Vēṉmal Nallini

Palyāṉaic-celkeḷu-kuṭṭuvaṉ is said to be the younger brother of Imayavarampaṉ. Nārmuticcēralātaṉ is the son of Cēralātaṉ and Vēlāvikkōmaṉ Padumandevi. Senkuṭṭuvaṉ is said to be the son of Kuṭavarkōmaṉ-Nedumceralatan and Naṛcōṇai,

daughter of Cōḷaṉ Maṇakkiḷḷi. Aṭukōṭpaṭṭuc-

cēralātaṉ is the son of Kuṭakko-Neṭuñcēralātaṉ and Vēḷavikkōmāntēvi. Celvakkaṭuṅkō is said to be the son of Aṅtuvaṉ and Poṛaiyanperuṅtēvi, that is, the daughter of Orutandai or Orūutandi. Peruñcēral is the son of Celvakkaṭuṅkō and

Vēlāvikkōmān Padumandevi. Iḷan- cēral is said to be the son of Kuṭṭuvan (Peruñcēral) Irum-porai[1] and Vēṇmāl-Antuvan Ceḷḷai, the daughter of Maiyūrkiḷān, perhaps the minister of Iḷañcēral.[2]

The genealogy as mentioned in these *patikams* has made Professor S. S. Bharati draw the conclusion that Marumakkattāyam was an ancient practice of the old Cērā monarchs, and the present practice is only a relic of the ancient custom.[3]

As against this inference, Pandit M. Raghava Aiyan-gar has made out a strong case and proved how the inter-pretation does not admit of Marumakkattāyam but only of Makkattāyam, of son succeeding father, as in the other parts of the country.[4] The *Cilappatikāram*[5] mentions Vēṇmāḷ as the wife of the Cēra king Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, and the

full name seems to be Ilaṅkō-vēṇmāḷ. According to a note to the *patikam* of the fifth Ten, Seṅkuṭṭuvan had a son

1 Ilañceral is the son and not the brother. The expression is similar to Iḷampancapandavas meaning, sons of the Pandavas.

2 From the *patikam* of the ninth Ten it is seen that a certain Maiyurkiḻāṉ was the minister of Iḷañcēral. The same *patikam* speaks of a Maiyurkiḻan as his grandfather. Either the two Maiyurkiḻans are different, or the grandfather of Ilañcēṟal was also his minister.

3 *Centamiḻ*, Vol. XXVII, No. 4; see also M. Srinivasa Aiyangar, *Tamil Studies*, p. 103 ff.

4 *Cēravēntartāyavaḻakku* in Tamil (1930); see also 'Marumakkattāyam and the Sangam Literature', *Z. I. I.*, Vol. IX, No. 3, p. 255 ff.

5 Canto xxv. 1. 5.

by name Kuṭṭuvancēral who was given to Paranar, the noted Caṅkam celebrity, as a gift, in addition to other presents. Collating all these available materials we can arrive at a tentative genealogy of the early Cērās, and the following table is drawn up for purposes of ready and easy reference.

Paternal line of Ceṅkuṭṭuvan

Utiyañcēral

Imayavarampaṉ Neṭuñcēralātaṉ — Palyāṉaic-celkeḻu-kuṭṭuvaṉ

= Naṟcōṉai (daughter of Cōḻā king Maṇakkiḷḷi)

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ = Iḷaṅkō-vēṇmāḷ

Kuṭṭuvancēral

Maternal line of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ

Maṇakkiḷḷi (Cōḷā)

Naṟcoṇai (daughter)
= Imayavarampaṉ Netuñcēralātaṉ

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ — Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ
Kuṭṭuvancēral

Maternal line of other Cērās

Vēḷavikkōmāṉ

daughter (No. 1) — daughter (No. 2)

daughter (No. 1) = Imayavarampaṉ Netuñcēralātan

daughter (No. 2) = Selvakkatuṉkō-Vaḷiyātaṉ

Nārmuticcēral Aṭukōṭpaṭṭuc-
ceralātan

Peruñcēral-Irumporai
(or Kuṭṭuvan-Irumporai)
=Vēṇmāl-Antuvan Ceḷḷai

Ilañcēral-Irumporai

Proceeding to find a solution for fixing the date of Ceṅkuṭṭuvañ, we find that Peruñcēralātan (probably Imaya- varampan Neduñcērlātan) was defeated and wounded in the chest at Veṇṇi, otherwise Veṇṇil,[1] by Karikala.[2]

The defeat was so crushing that the Cērā king abdicated his throne.[3] The reference in the *Akanāṉūṟu* is positive evidence for establishing the contemporaneity of Karikālā and Imayavarampaṉ, and Karikālā could not therefore have been the contemporary of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ. In other words the theory that Karikālā and

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ were con- temporaries has little to support it. Imayavarampaṉ must have died in the early half of the second century A. D.

We know from the *Patiṟṟuppattu* that Imayavarampaṉ and Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ reigned for fifty-eight and fifty years re- spectively. It would appear that Imayavarampaṉ had two queens and four sons, and one of them, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ,

was his successor. His brother Ilaṅkō-Aṭigaḷ became an ascetic. Of the other two, Nārmuticcēralātan seems to have been in charge of the northern part of the Koṉku kingdom, the region where was the hill Naṉṟā,[4] while

Ātukōṭpāttuccēralātan was in charge of the Kuṭṭanaṭu.

The last two were princes ruling under the suzerainty of the emperor reigning from Vañjikkaruvūr.

For purposes of fixing the date of the epic a beginning must be made from the year A. D.

172 or 173 which is the probable year of the foundation of the Pattini temple at

1 Identified with Kōyilvenni, a village near modern Mannargudi.

2 *Akam.*, st. 55; *Puram.*, st 65 (colophon) and st. 66.

3 The term *Vatākkiruntanan* in the texts is translated 'committed suicide' by P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar in *History of the Tamils*, pp. 335-7.

4 *Patirr.*, *patikam* to the seventh Ten.

the Cera capital; for Gajabahu, the king of Ceylon, who attended the consecration ceremony of the temple, came to

the throne only in A. D.
must have visited India

171, and we have to assume that he
after he became king. The question

of the Gajabahu synchronism has not found acceptance with the learned author of the *History of the Tamils.*[1] One argument is that the alternative reading for the word Kavavāku is Kaval, and if the latter reading were adopted, the edifice based on the Gajabahu synchronism would fall to the ground. We must emphasize the word *if.*

The editor, who has consulted no fewer than eleven manuscripts of the text and fourteen manuscript copies of the commentary, and whose scientific precision and punc- tillious care in collating the manuscripts cannot be questioned, has not only adopted Kayavāku as the correct reading, but has also shown how there are two Gajabahus men- tioned in the *Mahavamsa* differing in age by a thousand years,[2] and how Gajabahu I must be the king of Ceylon mentioned in the *Varantarumkātai* as having been present

1 p. 375, ff.

2 For an inscription of Gajabahu I, 171-193 on the elephants' stables or Ratanapāsāda, see M.A.S.C., Vol. I, No. 2. See also chronological table in B. G. Singe's translation of the second part of the *Mahavamsa* p. 20. According to this, Gajabahu II ascended the throne in A. D. 1142. Cf. M.A.S.C., Vol. II, No. *1*.

Cf. Ep. Z., Vol. III, No, 1, 'Ceylonese chronology', p. 9. Also H. W. Codrington's *Short History of Ceylon*, pp. 24, 26-34; C.A., Vol. X, p. 115.

This is also the view of investigators on the subject like Seshagiri Sastri, Kanakasabhai, Krishnaswami Aiyangar, and Nilakanta Sastri. It may be noted that Dr. S. K. Aiyangar, (*Ancient India*, p. 350) has answered the points raised by E. Hultzsch in S.I.I., Vol. II, No. 3, p. 378, with regard to this question.

at the festivities held in honour of Pattiṉikkaṭavuḷ by Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ.

The *Mahāvamsa*[1] says: 'After Vankanāsikatiss's death, his son Gajabāhukagāmani reigned twenty-two years.' He founded a number of *vihāras* and *stūpās*. Dr. Wilhelm Geiger, the learned translator of the *Mahāvamsa*[2] has furnished in his introduction a list of the ancient kings of Ceylon with the length of their respective reigns both in the Buddhist era and the Christian era. In this list Gajabāhukagāmani figures as the forty-sixth king, ruling from A. D. 171-193.[3] This must have been the Gajabāhu who is celebrated in the *Cilappatikāram*.

It is asked[4] how a devout follower of the Buddha could

embrace a new cult like the Pattiṉi cult. The answer is simple. In those days the religion followed by monarchs was cosmopolitan in character. There was not much of sectarian rancour. To the people then, God was one and might be worshipped in any shape or form. In the epoch when there was no nice distinction between the established religion of the land and the dissenting sects like the Jains and the Buddhists, it is no wonder that Gajabāhu built a temple in honour of the Pattiṉikkaṭavuḷ. Among the popular deities in Ceylon, Pattiṉi Dēvi figures as the guardian of female chastity. 'Two wooden images of her

and her husband in a cave at the Nikawaewa monastery

are supposed to date from the eleventh century.'[5] The

most notable of the images of the goddess Pattini Devi is

1 Canto xxxv. pp. 254-5.

2 Pali Text Society, 1912.

3 *Dipa.*, st. 22, 14 and 28. *Mahavamsa*, Intro. p. xxxviii.

4 *History of the Tamils*, p. 380.

5 V. A. Smith. *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, 1911, p. 748.

C 2

Also H. Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*, Fig. 272. 18

an image in bronze, 4 feet 9½ inches in height, discovered in Ceylon and presented to the British Museum in 1830.[1] To deny totally a tradition which receives corroboration from an

unexpected quarter, like the Pāli literature of Ceylon, and thus to shake the corner-stone of early South Indian chronology, would be a breach of the historical and critical method. For various reasons into which we need not enter here, the reference in the *Cilappatikāram* cannot be to Gajabāhu II who figures in the history of Ceylon nearly ten centuries after the time of Gajabāhu I. Thus the Gajabāhu synchronism is explained, and the date of the composition of the *Cilappatikāram* settled once for all. It was in the second half of the second century after Christ.

At that time (*circa* A. D. 172)

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was fifty years of age.[2] Therefore, when he started for the north he was forty-seven, as he had spent three years there. In the light of the statement in the *Patiṟṟuppattu* that he ruled for fifty years, it may be taken roughly that he ascend- ed the throne when he was twenty years of age and must have died about A. D. 192.

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ must, therefore, have led the northern expedition about A. D. 168, though these estimates cannot be accepted rigidly.

That Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ

took nearly three years for his North Indian expedition is evident from the following. While he was still in the north a certain Brahman, Māṭalaṉ by name, sought the audience of His Majesty, and after his conversa- tion with him, the royal astrologer informed him that it was thirty-two months since the latter left his

capital.[3] Again two years before Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ left for the north, Maṇi-

1 See frontispiece.

2 Canto xxviii, 11. 129-30.

3 Canto xxvii, 1. 149.

mēkalai was in Pukar, and when she

returned to Vañci after a five years' tour, it is said that it was three years since Ceṅkuṭṭuvan̲ had left for the north. Without going into further details, we may conclude that Imayavarampan̲ ruled from *circa* A. D. 80-140 and Ceṅkuṭṭuvan̲ from *circa* A. D. 140-192.

V

CEṄKUṬṬUVAN̲'S ACHIEVEMENTS

The fifth Ten of the *Patir̲r̲uppattu* is sung in praise of Cēran̲ Ceṅkuṭṭuvan̲ by the poet Paraṇar. Ceṅkuṭṭuvan̲ became the greatest of the Cēra monarchs. From the *patikam* can be gathered some knowledge as to his achievements. These can be categorically mentioned here.

(1) The success over the northern kings in his campaign to the Himalayas to get a stone

thereof to carve out an image of the Pattiṉikkaṭavuḷ.

(2) The lifting of cattle from the Iṭumbil forest tracts. It is said that on his return from the northern expedition the king spent some time on the outskirts of this forest.[1]

(3) The defeat of Naṉṉaṉ Vēnmāṉ or simply Naṉṉaṉ, the chieftain of the Veḷir, and the occupation of his capital Viyalūr.[2]

(4) The overthrow of a confederacy of nine Cōḷas at Nērivāyil[3] which was near the southern gateway of the ancient Uṟaiyūr.[4]

1 Canto xxviii, l. 118.

2 Canto xxvii, l. 115; *Aham.*, st. 97, 'Māmūlaṉār'.

3 Cantos xxix, 11. 116-7; xxvii, 11. 118-23.

4 *Anc. Ind.*, p. 95; also the commentary of Arumpata-varaiyāciriyar on *Cila.*, canto xxviii, 1. 117.

(5) The overthrow of seven kings and the wearing of their respective seven garlands in his crown in commemoration of his heroic deed.[1]

(6) His success over the Koṅkar[2] who can be identified with the Gangas, also called Koṅkudecarājākkaḷ.

During this encounter Kotukūr was completely devastated as the *Patirruppattu* has it.[3] There is a Kotukūrnāṭu today in the division of Puṉṉāṭu of the Mysore state.[4]

(7) His successful naval engagements and specially the battle of Mōkūr[5] where the *vēmbu*[6] or margosa tree of Paḷaiyaṉ was destroyed. It may be noted in passing that his naval engagements were so striking and decisive that he earned the title of Kaṭalpiṟakkōṭṭiya Vēlkeḻukuṭṭuvaṉ.[7] This can appropriately be compared with the statement[8] made at different places in the *Cilappatikāram*.

Most of these are corroborated by the *Cilappatikāram* which gives a detailed account of his expedition to the

1 Canto xxviii, 1. 169; *Patiṟṟ*., st. 45. In these places he is called Eḻumuṭimārpa.

2 Canto xxv, 11. 152-5.

3 *Patikam* to the fifth Ten.

4 See M. Raghava Aiyangar, *Cēraṉ Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ*, pp. 28-9; also *Ind. Ant.*, 1889, p. 369.

5 Canto xxvii, 11. 124-6. *Patiṟṟ*., st. 44, 49.

6 The reference to the wearing of the garland of margosa goes to prove that Mōkūr Paḻaiyaṉ was an ally of the Pāṇṭyan king and more probably a general of his. (*Maturaikkāñci*. 11. 507-8. *Akam*., st. 346).

7 *Patiṟṟ*., st. 41, 45, 46.

8 e. g. முந்நீரி னுள்புக்கு மூவாக் கடம்பெறிந்தான் canto

xvii, 'Uḷvarivāḷttu', 3. See canto xxviii, l. 135: canto xxix, 'Ūcal- vari', st. 1.

north to secure a block of stone to make the image of the Goddess of Chastity, and if we are to believe the account in the epic, this was the last of his achievements; for Māṭalaṉ has drawn attention[1] to all the six achievements mentioned above.

The poet Paraṇar refers to five of these seven achieve- ments. The two, which are not mentioned by him, are his northern expedition to get a stone for the Pattiṉi, and his success at the battle of Nērivāyil. If we place his achievements in chronological order these two were his last, and the northern expedition was the last of all. It would be appropriate to say that when Paraṇar sang of this Cēra, he had not undertaken these things. These deeds were done after Paraṇar sang the *Patiṟṟuppattu*. From the absence of any mention

by Paraṇar of these last two of his achievements, an endeavour has been made to distinguish Vēlkeḻukuṭṭuvaṉ from Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ.[1] And in this the correspondence of the five incidents, which marked the earlier activities of the king, has been ignored, with what valid reasons we cannot see. In the writer's opinion, Vēlkeḻukuṭṭuvaṉ is another name for Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ.

VI

AN ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER

Bold and powerful, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was able to bring under his control not only his own neighbours, the Pāṇṭya and the Cōḻa, but also to carry his conquest so far north as to earn the title of Imayavarampaṉ (literally 'one, the territorial limits of whose empire extended to the Himalayas'). We know his father had carried his arms up to the distant Himalayas and hence came to be

1 Canto xxviii, ll. 114-22.

2 *The Chronology of the Early Tamils*, pp. 124-5.

distinguished as Imayavarampaṉ Neṭuñcēralātaṉ. Already mention has been made of the achievements which Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ had to his credit, and which entitle him to be ranked with the great emperors of Ancient India. We shall here call attention to a few outstanding traits of his character.

The rather horrid detail of his having made the women-folk of Paḻaiyaṉ drag the margosa tree with a rope made of their twisted hair[1] may be dismissed as a poetic exaggeration, though there may be truth in the statement that he made the northern kings carry the stone for the Pattiṉi on their heads. These details and especially the fact of his making prisoners of the vanquished and the retreating

foes, which evoked scathing comments from the Pāṇṭya and the Cōḻa sovereigns of his time, go to prove that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was too severe an avenger of wrongs. The above incidents smack of the *asura* form of warfare so eloquently described in the *Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra*.[2].

Notwithstanding these incidents we find the king to be God-fearing and possessing a religious bent of mind. He was superstitious and had faith in astrology and astronomy. This is borne out by the fact that he set out on his northern expedition at an auspicious hour. That he was religious is seen from his prayers in the temples of Civa and

Viṣṇu on the eve of his historic march to the north.[3]

Besides, he was a patron of arts and letters. He spent his time in amusements which consisted of dancing and singing, It is said that a number of these dancers went along with him to the north. That this was an

1 *Patikam* to the fifth Ten.

2 For details see *Ar. Sās.* Bk. xii, §1; also V. R. R. Dikshitar, *The Mauryan Polity*, 1932, p. 129.

3 Canto xxvi, ll. 54-66.

ancient war-practicc is seen from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, where it is said that actors and dancing-masters followed the army of Satrughna.[1] He rewarded learned men with presents, some of which

were invaluable. The gifts received by Paranar and Māṭalaṉ may be quoted as instances in point. Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ had a fine artistic mind as is seen from the fact that he went all the way to the Himalayas in order to fetch a good stone to carve out an image of Kaṇṇaki.[2] That he was a follower of the established religion of the land and that he was Kṣatriya by caste are evident from the fact that he engaged himself in the per- formance of Vēdic sacrifices, after the temple was con- structed and consecrated to Kaṇṇaki. From this time until his death it appears that he took to a life of ease and peace, penance and prayer, his mind being centred on the study and practice of *dharma.*[3]

He was a great soldier and a bold warrior. The prowess of his arms was felt throughout the Tamil land, the Cōḷa and Pāṇṭya being his tributary allies. He carried his sword as far as the Ganges, and

brought the whole of India under his suzerainty. According to the *Harihara Caturanga*, a manuscript on War written by the minister of Pratāparudra, the Kabanda engages in a dance, usually known as the devil dance, whenever a thousand *śūras* fall dead on the field of battle, or when a *śūra* kills one thousand able heroes in a battle. Viewed in this light, and from the fact that the Kabanda danced his dance in glee, blessing Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ for the sumptuous food for him and his companions, it transpires that Ceṅ-kuṭṭuvaṉ was a *śūra* and a *vīra*. With unlimited power at his disposal and being a vigorous ruler, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ

1 Bk. vii, ch. 64, st. 3.

2 Canto xxv, ll. 115-31.

3 Canto xxx, ll. 170 ff.

was able to keep peace in
for a full half-century.

his vast and diversified empire
This would in itself be ample
proof of his greatness. No doubt he is the most memor- able figure in the history of ancient Tamil India.

VII

KARIKĀLA IN THE CILAPPATIKĀRAM

Another king much celebrated by Ilankō-Aṭikaḷ next only to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, is the Cōḻa king Karikāla. If we are to believe the account in the *Poruṉarāṟṟuppaṭai*[1] Karikāla was a posthumous child and son of Uruvap-

pahrēr-Iḷañcetceṉṉi. He began to reign when he was

a mere child. It is said that in the battle of

Veṉṉi, Imayavarampaṉ was wounded and the victory was won by the boy Karikāla.[2] His was a benevolent form of administration.[3] His interest in irrigation and consequently in agriculture is seen from his construction of embankments for the Kāvēri as testified to by the Leyden grant.[4] For this work, it is said that thousands of Ceylonese labourers were employed.

The text of the *Cilappatikāram* contains three references to Karikāla.[5] The first reference is to his military prowess. Here he is called Tirumāvaḷavaṉ, which term, it is worthy of note, occurs in the *Paṭṭiṉappālai* (1. 299) of Kaṭiyalūr

Uruttiraṉkaṇṇaṉār who was the recipient of 16,00,000 gold pieces at the hands of Karikāla (ll. 19-21). This internal evidence establishes beyond doubt the contemporaneity of the poet and the king,

1 ll. 130-48.

2 *Akam.*, st. 246; of *Maṇi.*, canto iv, ll. 107-8.

3 *Paṭṭiṉappālai*, ll. 283-4.

4 J. Burgess and Natesa Sastri, *Tam. and Sans, Ins.*, No. 29. pp. 204-24. See also *Anc. Ind.*, p. 349.

5 Cantos v, ll. 90-104; vi, ll. 159-60; xxi, l. 11 ff.

a chief plank in determining the date of Karikāla. The second reference gives him the

full name of Karikālvala- van by which term the *Puranānūru* 66 mentions him. In the third reference in the text referred to above, we have the story of Karikāla's daughter who, finding her husband, the ruler of Vañci, being washed away by the floods, plunged courageously into the waters and rescued him by the power of her chasity. It is unfortunate that we have no more details about this incident, not even the names of that daughter and her husband.

An instance of his military prowess can be said to be the carving of the bow emblem on the Himalayas and the consequent overthrowing of the Arya monarchs of the north. This march was prompted by the fact of the intrusion of the northern kings into South India. As if to corroborate this statement the *Cilappatikāram* elsewhere evidences the fact that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was an ally of Avanti (Ujjain in Mālva), and of the kings of Vajra and Maga- dha. We have records, literary and epigraphical, which testify to such

invasions during the epoch of the Nandas and the Mauryas. There was a reaction. Powerful southern kings like Karikāla, Imayavarampaṉ Neṭuñ- cēralātaṉ and Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ led expeditions to the north and their unqualified victories stemmed the tide of political invasions from the north for the time being; for we know Samudragupta carried his victorious arms to the very south. The extant commentaries on the epic regard Karikāla as the contemporary of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, the hero of the Vañjikkāṇṭam of the epic. The commenta- tors say that the Cōḻa king under reference in the Pukār-kāṇṭam and even later was Karikālaccōḻaṉ.[1] But this militates against the indications furnished by the text of the *Cilappatikāram*. That a certain king by name Kari-

1 *Arumpatavurai*, canto iii, l. II; also gloss of kunallar on cantos i, ll. 65-8, v, l. 212, and vi, l. 15.

Aṭiyārk-

kāla lived, and that he was an ancient monarch is testified to us by the anthologies of the *Puranānūru* and the *Akanānūru*, besides other Caṅkam works. Here are celebrated the achievements of the Cōḷa Karikāla, and if we compare these achievements with those referred to in the *Cilappatikāram*, it is just possible that the Cōḷa under reference is no other than Karikāla.

In describing the two achievements of Karikāla—the march to the Himalayas, and the festival of bathing in the first freshes[1] of the Kāvēri, the poet refers to them as past incidents by the significant expression *annāḷ*, making us infer that Karikāla lived a little before the epic was composed, and not very far removed from the date of its composition. The next question arises as to who this Karikāla was, and what was his relationship to Cēran Ceṅkuṭṭuvan. In the *patikam*, the prologue

to the poem, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's mother is said to be a daughter of the Cōḷa king, and her name was Naṟcōṇai. According to the *Patiṟṟuppattu* (the fourth Ten) there was one Cōḷa Maṇakkiḷḷi. His daughter must be the mother of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ and her name was Naṟcōṇai. Maṇakkiḷḷi in his turn must have been the son of Karikāla. In the light of this relationship, Karikāla must have been the maternal great-grandfather of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ and not his grandfather as some scholars would have it. If the latter relationship can be accepted, Maṇakkiḷḷi would stand by himself, and it would be difficult to find for him a proper place in the genealogical list. Hence it stands to reason that Karikāla must have lived a generation before the age of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, and could not therefore have been his contemporary.[2]

1 Canto vi, ll. 159-60.

2 Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in his learned study of

Karikāla accepts that the figure of Karikāla is to start with

Incidentally, we may remark that the Karikāla of the *Cilappatikāram* or of the Caṅkam works has nothing to do with the Karikāla represented to be a contemporary of Trilōcana Pallava and Cāḷukya Vijayāditya of the early fifth century A.D.[1] It is still a moot question who this Trilōcana was and when he lived.[2] Even if his date and identity were established, and there is no reliable testimony to establish it, there is nothing to prevent another Karikāla having flourished in Pukār a few centuries later. If the reference in the *Akanāṉūṟu*[3] has any significance at all, it shows, as has already been said, the contemporaneity of Imayavarampaṉ Neṭuñcēralātaṉ and Karikāla. Though we cannot definitely mark out the chronological limits of Karikāla's career, it is reasonable to assume that he lived at the commencement of the second century A. D. It seems to be certain that at the accession of

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ to the Cēra throne (*circa* A. D. 140) Karikāla was dead, and Maṇakkiḷḷi was reigning. For, according to the account preserved in the *Cilappatikāram*, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ had to interfere in the disputed election to the throne of the Cōḷas,[4] and it needs no stretch of the imagination to deduce that this was the consequence of the death of Maṇakkiḷḷi's son. The conclusion is irresistible that the duration of the reigns of Karikāla and Maṇakkiḷḷi was comparatively

thoroughly realistic and historical, and indicates

his view that

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ came at least half a century after Karikāla, if not earlier. (*Studies* 49-50.)

in Cōḷa History and Administration, pp. 37.

1 *Contra* P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar, *History of the Tamils*, pp. 382-7; Dr. N. V. Ramanayya, *Trilōcana Pallava.*

2 For Krishna Sastri's opinion, see, *Ep.* 58, n; 2.

Ind., Vol. X, p.

3 St. 55.

4 Canto xxvii, ll. 118-23.

short. According to the evidence cited by the *Uraiperu-katturai* it was Perumkiḷḷi or Perunaṟkiḷḷi that succeeded Maṇakkiḷḷi, or probably his son Neḍumkiḷḷi, and was reigning at Uṟaiyūr at the time of the consecration of the Pattiṉi temple.

From this foregoing evidence the following genea- logical list of the early Cōḷas of the first and second centuries A. D.

can be drawn.

Iḷañcēṭcenni
|
Karikāla
|
Peruvirarkiḷḷi

Maṇakkiḷḷi (died on the battle-field with Neṭumcēratātan)

(Neṭumkiḷḷi Narcōṇai

=Neṭuñcēralātan

Perumkiḷḷi *alias*

Nalamkiḷḷi Kiḷḷivaḷavan Perunarkiḷḷi

Ceṅkuṭṭuvan

VIII

THE POLITICAL CONDITION OF NORTH INDIA

The *Cilappatikāram* also gives an insight into the political condition of North India in the first

three cen- turies of the Christian era. This was the dark period of Indian History so far as North India was concerned. But the recent researches of Dr. K. P. Jayaswal in his *History of India A. D.* 150-350, have shed much light and lifted up the veil of gloom. It was only under the Guptas that North India regained its old position of prestige and pre-eminence. During that period, which ex- tended for more than two centuries, there was no tower-
ing personality of prowess and

valour to meet a strong foe

like Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, The whole region was divided into a number of petty principalities over each of which was a chieftain. It is said that there were as many as one

thousand chieftains whom Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ had to encounter single-handed.[1] Though this number is an exaggeration, it demonstrates that there were a good number of small and independent states. Apparently, these different chiefs were enjoying autonomy. The principal kingdoms mentioned in the epic were Avanti, Vajra, Magadha and Mālva.[2] We know by their gifts of choice presents that the first three acknowledged the overlordship of Karikāla. The king of Mālva was an ally of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ. Some of them became jealous of the arms of the neighbouring monarchs. Hearing that a south Indian king like the powerful Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was advancing towards their kingdoms; some of the prominent minor rulers, Uttiran, Vicit- tiraṉ, Uruttiraṉ, Bairavaṉ, Cittiraṉ, Ciṅkaṉ, Tanuttiraṉ, and Śivētaṉ, joined together under the common leader- ship Kaṉaka and Vijaya, and went to meet Ceṅkuṭṭu- vaṉ encamped far from the north of the Ganges.[3] The scene of action mentioned

is Kuyilāluvam.

The political situation in the north was quite favour- able to the South Indian conqueror. The Āndhrās were in the position of allies. Kaniṣka, the other powerful king, was already dead. The smaller chieftains were not strong enough to offer a bold front to the strong arms of a conquering monarch like Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ. The result was a crushing defeat for the northerners. Excepting those who had been slain and who had fled from the field of battle in fear and in different disguises, other important leaders were captured as prisoners of war, taken to the

1 Canto xxv, ll. 160-6

2 Canto v, ll. 99 ff.

3 Canto xxvi, ll. 180-6.

distant south as a mark of humiliation, and thrown into

prison after being shown to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's brother-

monarchs, the Pāṇṭya and the Cōḻa.

It would not be out of place to refer here to the

Yavana-nāḍu and the Mālva region which find mention

in the *Cilappatikāram*. According to the *patikam* of the

second Ten of the *Patiṟṟuppattu*, Imayavarampaṉ put the

Yavanas to disgrace by pouring ghee over their heads.

The Yavanas are mentioned frequently in Tamil litera-

ture including the *Cilappatikāram*.[1] These

were originally foreign traders with whom the Tamils had commercial transactions. But by the time of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ they had settled in India and, according to the *Cilappatikāram*, had their own flourishing and independent *nāṭu*, probably the Indus region.[2] They seem to have been very wealthy for diamonds formed part of the tribute paid by them. It appears that they acknowledged the overlordship of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ by paying tribute to him.

Mention is again made of the aid given by Nūṟṟuvar-Kaṉṉar. The late Mr. Kanakasabhai identified them with the Śātakarṇi.[3] According to the version in the epic these

were apparently a class of people having their residence in the Ganges tracts. It is said that they helped Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ with boats to cross the Ganges.[4] The context does not warrant it to be the action of a particular individual but a group of persons. If the reference is to a certain Sātakarṇi[5] it must be Śiva Śri Pulumāyi (A. D. 163-170),

1 Canto xxix, 'Ūcalvari st. 3; and canto xxviii, l. 141.

2 See in this connetion V. A. Smith, *The Early History of India*. 4th ed., revised by S. M. Edwardes, 1924. pp. 462-3.

3 *The Tamils 1800 Years Ago*, p. 7.

4 Canto xxvi, l. 176.

5 According to Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar, the king of

Mālva is under reference

especially from the fact that he was

In fact the neutrality or rather the alliance of the Andhrās was a preliminary condition for the success of the northern expedition of the Cēra monarch. That the Āndhrās conquered Magadha and established an All-India empire cannot be gainsaid. Light comes from an unex- pected quarter which helps us to identify Bālakumāra and Vijaya. In this connetion Ptolemy's reference to Baleo-kourous is of capital importance.

Baleokourous is per- haps a corrupt form of Bālakumāra. Him Ptolemy re- fers to as a contemporary ruling prince about A. D. 160. From the fact the Bālakumāra belonged to a collateral line of the Āndhrās it can be inferred that he was an ally of

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ. A certain Śātakarṇi was the im- perial ruler at this time, He was perhaps Yajñaśri Śātakarṇi or Pulumâyi. According to the account of the *Matsya Purāṇa*, Yajñaśri was succeeded by Vijaya, a usurper. If we are to believe the epic account, this Vijaya was the son of Bālakumara. What is remarkable is the coincidence of dates, which fixes Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ in the latter half of the second century A. D.[1]

Before we close this section attention may be drawn to the futile attempt made by some scholars to identify Kaṉaka and Vijaya with Kaniṣka and Vijayakirti of Khotan. According to Tibetan sources, shortly after A. D. 120, an expedition against India was undertaken by Kanika in connetion with Vijayakirti king of Khotan and the king of Guzan. This Kanika is identified with Kaniṣka; but as Prof. F. W. Thomas points out[2] this is in conflict with Tāranātha's statement. According to the

present at the installation of the Pattinitevi. (For a temple of Pattini in E. Mālva, see T. G. Aravamudhan, *The Kāvēri, the*

Maukharis and the Sangam Age. pp. 41-2.)

1 See K. G. Sesha Iyer, *I. H. Q.*, Vol. I.

2 *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XXXII, 1903, p. 349.

Professor, Kaniṣka lived in the Mauryan epoch. If on the other hand, Kaniṣka is identified with king Kanika, then Kanika 'must have started on his career from the Khotan country'. The evidence of the *Kalpanāmaṇḍiṭikā* and of the *Mahārājakanikalēkha* points in the same direction. It is also to be noted that at the time of the expedition of Vijayakīrti to India, the ruling prince in Khotan was Vijayasimha. Last but not least is the tradition that Kaniska left India after his conquest and went back to Khotan. Excepting the accidental identity of the names Kaṉaka and Vijaya, other events connected with them have no bearing on the historical data furnished by the *Cilappatikāram.*[1] Vāsiṣka had succeeded[2] Kaniṣka in A. D. 152. If Chinese historical sources which mention the history of western countries down to A. D. 125 are to be believed, we have to take it that Kaniṣka rose to power after A. D. 125; for he is not mentioned in the Chinese books. It is impossible by any stretch

of imagination for a Khotan prince to invade, conquer India up to the Ganges—for according to the *Cilappatikāram* the battle was fought on the banks of the Ganges—and to found an empire. It could not stop with this. Having firmly established himself, he heard of the distant Tamil kings and spoke slightingly of their prowess. All this in the course of less than twenty-five years is an impossibility. Hence this identification cannot stand a critical examination.

IX

THE POLITICAL CONDITION OF SOUTH INDIA

From the foregoing account we have a rough estimate of the political condition of the Tamil land at the begin-

1 *C. I. I.*, Vol. II, Pt. I, 1929, 'Kharōshṭhī Inscriptions',

by Sten Konow, Intro., p. lxxv ff.

2

According to inscriptional evidence; ibid. p. lxxviii.

ning of the Christian era. The three powerful kings were the Cēra, the Cōḻa, and the Pāṇṭya. The Pallavas of Kāñci were yet to come. Wars among these states were frequent. Often two kingdoms joined together against the third.

THE CĒRA KINGDOM

In the section on geographical data an attempt has been made to locate the *nāṭus* of the ancient Cēra king- dom. These were

broadly classified into the *malaināṭu* and the *kaṭalmalaināṭu*. The *malaināṭu* (literally, moun- tainous country) was the Konkunāṭu, a part of which comprised the territory now occupied by the Salem and Coimbatore districts. Here was the famous capital city Vañcikkaruvūr. Here the Kollis and the Ānamalai range are the chief hills, and it may be remarked in passing that the Ānamalais are said to contain lofty peaks. The districts of Malayāḷa (the territory covering modern Mala- bar) were known as *kaṭalmalaināṭu* (region of seas and mountains). Here the chief divisions were Kuṭṭanāṭu,[1] Kuṭanāṭu and the Pūḻināṭu. The term *kuṭṭa* means lowlands and apparently the reference is to the back- waters of the Malabar region. Probably it extended from Cranganore to modern Trivandrum. The Kuṭanāṭu covered the territory from opposite the Palghat gap to
South Kanara and

(literally, small hilly

Coorg. The region of the Poraiyan, tracts), extended from Palghat to the Konkunāṭu proper.

The Cēra king was known generally as Kuṭavar- kōmān or the lord of the western region. His other titles were Kuṭṭuvan, Konkan, Pūḻiyan, Poraiyan, etc. This extensive Cēra kingdom, infested here and there by lofty hills, could not have been ruled directly by the cen-

1 *Patiṟṟ*., glossary, p. 168.

C—3

tral authority. If we analyse the available data, the inference forces itself on us that these different *nāṭus* were the various divisions of the empire, each division under the charge of a governor or viceroy who was appointed by and who owed allegiance to the Cēra king reigning at Vañcik-karuvūr. From the nature of the materials before us, it is not possible to say when these *nāṭus* were conquered and by whom. But at the time when the *Cilappatikāram* was composed, or even long before it, these *nāṭus* formed part and parcel of the Cēra kingdom. By extending their mighty empire, the Cēras occasionally earned the titles of Pukār-Celva and Imayavarampa. The Cēra state had international relations, or more appropriately inter-state relations, not only with its immediate neighbours, but also with distant rulers. The enemy kings were conquered, and often their states were annexed. Sometimes the defeated monarchs were reinstated under certain conditions. At the time of which we are speaking, the Cēra kingdom was the most powerful and the most wealthy of the Tamil kingdoms.

THE CŌḺA KINGDOM

At the commencement of the story in the *Cilappati-kāram*, the ruler of the Cōḷa kingdom was Kuṇavar-

kōmān, and the kingdom had two capitals Uraiyūr and Pukār. The ruler of Uraiyūr was Maṇakkiḷḷi or more probably his son Neṭuṅkiḷḷi. According to the *Maṇimēkalai,* Māvaṇkiḷḷi or Kiḷḷivaḷavaṉ was the ruler of Pukār. His younger brother was Iḷaṅkiḷḷi (also Nalaṅkiḷḷi).

Pukār

There was a civil war between the Uraiyūr and Kiḷḷis. The most important battle was fought at Kāriyāṟu where Neṭuṅkiḷḷi was slain by Iḷaṅkiḷḷi. Neṭuṅkiḷḷi, it may be remembered, was the uncle of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, and he had a son Peruṅkiḷḷi or Perunaṟkiḷḷi.

The succession was disputed, and Ceṅkuṭṭuvuaṉ had to interfere. In this connexion he had to overthrow a confederacy of nine Cōḻas, and ultimately he succeeded in enthroning his uncle's son Peruṅkiḷḷi.

From this it is reasonable to assume that, besides the two capitals, there were other small semi-independent states within the Cōḻa kingdom where minor chieftains reigned, but all of whom acknowledged the overlordship of the Cōḻa at the capital. It is worthy of note that the Cōḻamaṇṭalam extended as far as Kāñci, which belonged to Karikāla as provided by independent testimony.[1]

The importance of Pukār was not long-lived. Anticipating the forthcoming devastation of the city, the Būta at the Būtacatukkam, which was brought from Indra's abode by Mucukunta, was removed to Vañci by the Cēra

king[2]. The destruction of Pukār by the erosion of the sea was effected during the period between the time when Maṇimēkalai left Pukār on a tour to Maṇipallavam and other places, and her return after nearly five years. This was probably in the year A. D. 170. Notwithstanding the ruin of the city, Pukār continued to be the capital, though diminished in importance. Once more Uṟaiyūr rose to prominence as the chief seat of the Cōḻa monarchs. At the time of the establishment of the Kaṇṇaki temple at Vañci, the Cōḻa ruler was Perunaṟkiḷḷi (also Peruṅkiḷḷi)[3] who also had a temple built for her at Uṟaiyūr, his capital.

THE PĀṆṬYAN KINGDOM

Proceeding to speak about the Pāṇṭyan kingdom,

Madura was flourishing as the capital of

Āriyappaṭai-

1 *Maṇi.*, canto xxviii, ll. 168-72.

2 *Sila.*, Canto xxviii, ll. 147-8.

3 *Uraiperukaṭṭurai*, l. 4.

katanta Neṭuñceḻiyan[1]. It was a busy centre of trade and

commerce and attracted even people like Kōvalaṉ and

Kaṇṇaki. But the city was not to flourish long. Neṭuñceḻiyaṉ ordered the unjust execution of the innocent Kōvalaṉ and this cost the king's life and the destruction

of the city. The ancient Pāṇṭyan kingdom had another

capital at Korkai. From the *Uraiperukatturai* it is seen that at Korkai, was reigning Verrivērceliyan (also Ilañceliyan) at the time when Ceṅkuṭṭuvan was in the north. Ilañceliyan was the younger brother of Āriyappaṭaikatanta Neṭuñceliyan or simply Naṭuñceliyan. The latter was a man of letters,[2] and was a patron of literature. During his reign, Korkai was the seat of the Yuvarāja who was the king's own brother. The latter was crowned king while Cenkuṭṭuvan was absent in the north[3]. Finding his country suffering from a disastrous famine, he ordered the sacrifice of a thousand goldsmiths as an offering in honour of the Goddess of Chastity installed in his capital.

He was also known as Verrivērceliyan.[4] It is believed that after he became king he took the title of

Nanmāran.

Nanmāran had a son Neṭuñceḻiyan of Talaiyālankānam fame and a grandson of Ukkirapperuvaḻuti.[5] This Peruvaḻuti with the attribute *Kānappērtanta* was a friend and contemporary of Perunaṛkiḻḻi (Rājasūyamvēṭṭa) and the Cēra Mārivenkō.[6]

1 *Kaṭṭurai* at the end of the 'Maturaikkāṇṭam'; also Ariyappaṭaikatanta Neṭuñceḻiyan.

2 See his verse in *Puṛam.*, st. 183.

3 Canto xxvii, ll. 114-38.

4 ibid., ll. 127-34.

5 *Puṛam.*, st. 76 ff; *Akam.*, st. 36. Cf. the Sinnamanūr copper-plate.

6 *Puṛam.*, st. 367 where the poetess Avvaiyār celebrates these three kings.

OTHER KINGDOMS

In the above outline of the political condition of South India mention has been made of the three chief Tamil king- doms. But a study of the Cankam works, especially the *Puranāṉūṟu* and the *Akanāṉūṟu*, points to a number of petty kingdoms ruled by chieftains of minor importance besides these three major kingdoms. There is not enough material to deal in detail with these chiefs. But a refer- ence has to be made to the Koṅkiḷaṅkōcar, or simply the Kōcar, whose country went by the name of Tuḷu- nāṭu;[1] and these Kōcar can be identified with the Satyaputras of the Acōkan inscriptions.[2] According to the testimony of literature, there was one Koṅkunāṭu which seems to have been comprised of the Cēra king- dom, the Tuḷunāṭu, and the country of Gangar and Kaṭṭiyar.

Our investigation would be incomplete if we did not mention other countries and peoples, mostly of South India, which were antagonistic to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ. These are the Kaliṅkar, the Karunāṭar the Bangalar the Gangar, and the Kaṭṭiyar.[8]

The Kaliṅkar were the people of Kaliṅka, whose history can be traced back by independent testimony to the later Vēdic and epic periods. It continued to be a power- ful kingdom during the time of the Nandas and the Mauryas.
We get a glimpse of the ancient history of Kaliṅka in the *Cilappatikāram*. There were two famous

1 *Akam*, st. 15.

2 See paper by V. R. R. Dikshitar on 'The Kōśar' read to the All-India Oriental Conference, Patna, 1930, also his article in *Indian Culture*, Vo'. I, Pt.

I., Calcutta, 1934; also in Pt. III, the contribution entitled 'Who were the Satyaputras?'.

3 Canto xxv, ll. 156-7.

cities. Ciṅkapura[1] and Kapilapura, ruled over respectively by Vasu and Kumara, of cognate relationship. Civil wars between them were common.[2]

The Karunāṭar, on the other hand, were the Kaṉṉaṭa people who are described as being hard-hearted and fierce. Karunāṭu means elevated country. Possibly the reference is to the people who occupied the plateau which was above sea-level. It may possibly refer to the region now occupied by the Mysore country.[3] The Caṅkam literature knows again of a people called Vaṭukar who are also partly identified with the Kanarese people and partly

with the Telugus. The term simply means 'people of the north' and hence must be the north of Tamiḻakam. Who the Bangalar were it is difficult to say; but it may be

that they were the people of Bengal. We know from the Buddhist legends that there was intercourse by sea bet- ween Bengal and Ceylon at least from the fifth century B.C. when Vijaya is said to have landed here. It is reasonable to suppose that the route lay through the Coromandel coast. No doubt its effects were felt by the Tamil coun- tries as well. The Gangar can be said to be the people of Gangavāṭi whose capital was Talakad. The Kaṭṭiyar are often mentioned in the Caṅkam works,[4] and they seem to have occupied the territory lying to the south of the Vaṭukarpūmi. Apparently these were small chieftains who enjoyed independent rule. During the days of the

1 R. D.

Bannerji relates a legend that led to the foundation of Ciṅkapura which became the capital of northern

Kaliṅka. He is inclined to identify this city with the village of Singur in the Hooghly district of SW. Bengal. *History of Orissa*, Vol. I, p. 49.

2 Canto xxiii, I. 138 ff.

See also *Maṇi.*, canto xxvi, l. 15 ff. 3 For the derivation of Karunāṭar see *Mysore Gazetteer*, Vol. I, pp. 254-7.

4 *Akam.*, st. 44 and 226, and *Kuṟuntokai*,

st. 11.

Vljayanagar empire their descendants were ruling over the territory now occupied by the Salem district.[1]

CEYLON

The mention of Gajabāhu, the king of Ceylon, as

having been present at the installation ceremony of the Goddess of Chastity is significant from more than one standpoint. It shows the frequent intercourse between Ceylon and South India. According to the *Makāvamca* the invasions by Tamil kings into the kingdom of Ceylon were pretty frequent, and were resented by the Ceylonese. We hear of an old woman complaining to Gajabāhu that among the 12,000 persons taken away by Karikāla for making an embankment on the Kāvēri, was her only son. Notwithstanding this, the Ceylon king's relations with Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ were cordial. As became an ally, he was

present at the celebration of his victorious march to North India. 'South India and Ancient Ceylon' is a fascinating subject of study for a student of South Indian History, and it is hoped that a fuller treatment of the subject will be undertaken in the future.[2]

X

SOME FEATURES OF THE ADMINISTRATION

Long and laborious research in ancient Indian polity has tended to remove the misconception generally prevalent that all ancient Indian monarchies were autocracies. The consensus of opinion among scholars of the modern day is that the ancient Indian monarchs were not autocratic, but were subject to the laws

of the land both

customary and statutory. There were democratic insti-

1 See M. Raghava Aiyangar, *Cēran Ceṅkuṭṭuvan*, pp. 112-3.

2 An attempt has already been made by Mr. C. Rasanayagam in this direction in his book *Ancient Jaffna*, 1926.

tutions in the country which kept the king under control

and prevented him from acting unduly on his own initia-

tive. Such institutions were common both in North

India and South India.[1]

But confining ourselves to South Indian polity we may make the statement that the king was benevolent and cared for the promotion of the welfare of his subjects. We know how the Cōḷa king Karikāla converted jungles into regions of fertility and wealth and how he undertook large irrigation schemes. There are stories told of his even-handed justice.[3] So was known the Pāṇṭyan Neṭuñceḻiyaṉ who gave up his life when he heard that he had meted out unjustifiable punishment to the innocent Kōvalaṉ. These instances are enough to prove that the king was no autocrat.

ASSEMBLIES

In the conduct of his administration

the king was assisted by the assembly of five (*aimperum-kuḻu*) which consisted of the minister, the *purōhita*, the commander-in-chief, an ambassador and a spy, and by a group of eight officials (*eṇpērāyam*), the superintendent of the accounts, the head of the executive, the officer of the treasury, the chamberlain, the representatives of the citizens, the commander, the chief of the warriors.[3] elephant-warriors and of the horse-

1 For an elaborate study of these institutions see V. R. R. Dikshitar, *Hindu Administrative Institutions*, 1929.

2 *Paḻamoḻi*, st. 6; *Maṇi.*, canto iv, ll. 107-8.

3 Cantos iii, l. 126; v, l. 157; xxvi, l. 38. Also *Maṇi.*, canto i, l. 17.

The *eṇpērāyam* is also interpreted in a different way as *eṇperumuṇaivar* (*Tamil Lexicon*, Vol. I, p. 520). These were pro- fessional people who catered

for the needs of the royal household.

To illustrate; King Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was served by Villa-
vaṉkōtai, the commander of the land forces, and Aḻumbil-
vēḷ, the superintendent of income and expenditure.
Sañcaya and Nīla were the chief messengers. Sañcaya was

the head of the Kañcuka-mākkaḷ. The spies are described as wandering in different disguises in the capitals of the other kingdoms while the spies of other kings were going about in Vañci. The king consulted his officials before he undertook any business. That the queen attended such a council and had her say in the questions debated upon can be presumed from the fact that Ceṅkuṭṭuvan̲'s queen Iḷankōvēṇmāḷ was present in the Council Chamber and took part in the discussion when the question of erecting the temple to Ptatin̲i Tēvi was decided.[1] The monotony of state business was often enlivened by dancing and music by the class of Cākkaiyar whose head was

Kūttuḷpaṭuvōṉ[2]. The kingship was generally hereditary.[3] and the king reigned according to the laws of the land.

As has been pointed out already the theory of Marumakkattāyam as prevalent among the Cēras is not supported by the *Cilappatikāram*. On the other hand its evidence nullifies any such theory. The king knew the evil effects of tyrannical rule[4] and hence endeavoured to do justice.

FLAGS, ETC

The three kings of the Tamil land had as their respective standards, the bow, the fish, and the tiger. They

We hear Mātari the cowherdess saying that she had to send ghee to the palace the next day (canto xvii, l. 7)

1 Cantos xxv, ll. 107-14; xxviii, l. 50.

2 Canto xxvi, l. 125.

3 Canto xxvii, l. 134.

4 *Maṇi.*, canto vii, l. 12.

were further distinguished by garlands of palmyra, mar- gosa, and *atti* leaves and flowers. We search the texts in vain for a national flag, for politically India was then divided into many nations each called after the name of their respective tribes.

CONDUCT TOWARDS PRINCES

Refractory sons were severely dealt with. The ex- amples of Manunītikaṇṭa Cōḻa, and Kiḷḷivaḷavaṉ are fur- nished by the epic. When it was feared that some prince would stand in the way of the legitimate heir succeeding.

to the throne, the former took to a life of renunciation.

Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ, the brother of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, is a case in point.

INTERREGNUM

Sometimes it so happened that there was an interval between the decease of the reigning king and the appointment of his successor. This was what happened at the death of Neṭuñceḻiyaṉ by the curse of Kaṇṇaki. Then the council was in charge of the kingdom till Iḷañceḻiyaṉ, the Imperial Viceroy at Koṟkai, was elected to the throne.[1]

ROYAL AMUSEMENTS

Among the royal amusements were dancing and music by professionals.

The king often retired to what may

be called a pleasure resort, *ilavantikaippaḷḷi*. He was generally accompanied there by his queen. It is said that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ spent some time in that park in the company of his queen Iḷaṅkōvēṇmāḷ.[2]

1 Canto xxvii, ll, 132-8.

2 Cantos x, l. 31; xxv, l. 4.

RELEASE OF PRISONERS

Among the festivities of the state figured the king's birthday. It is called *Perunāḷ* (also *Perumaṅkalam*) when there was a general release of prisoners. Such general amnesty was also granted on other similar occasions. For example, on the occasion of the founding of the temple of Pattiṉi Tēvi, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ

ordered the release of prisoners.[1]

TULĀBĀRADĀNAM

The *tulābāradānam* was a redeeming feature of the royal festivities. It was a gift of gold to the deserving, generally a *srōtriya*, equal to the donor's weight. It figures as one of the sixteen *mahādānas* as prescribed by the Purāṇas like the *Matsya* and the *Linga Purāṇas*.[2] It is said the Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ made this gift to the Brahman Māṭalaṉ[3] on the banks of the Ganges after he had had the stone intended for the image of Kaṇṇaki bathed in the sacred river.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

The department of finance was under the control of a body of officials who went by the name Kāvitimākkaḷ. Perhaps the Kāviti was the chief finance minister who looked after the collection of revenues in the right season and in the proper way. He was one of the

five officials whose advice was sought on questions of state finance by . the king. His establishment went by the name *āyak-kaṇakkar*,[4] which, it is said, announced a remission of taxes when the temple of Kaṇṇaki was founded.

1 Canto xxviii, ll. 204-5.

2 See V. R. R Dikshitar, *Matsya Purāṇa*, 1935. p. 96.

3 Canto xxvii, ll 175-6.

4 Canto xxviii, ll. 204-6.

COMMERCE, A SOURCE OF REVENUE

As a source of revenue commerce came only next to agriculture. There was active trade by land and sea. It is said that bales and cartloads were numbered and mark- ed (*kaṇṇeḻuttu*). The merchants were the

wealthiest community in the land and the king befriended them by honouring them with titles. Eṭṭi[1] was one such title.

TREASURE TROVE

We hear of an Eṭṭi Caṅkamaṉ, a flourishing merchant at Madura.[2] Treasure trove was generally the property of the state, and tended to swell the royal exchequer.

But so far as the Pāṇṭyan kingdom was concerned we hear that the Pāṇṭyan Neṭuñceḻiyaṉ issued a proclamation to the effect that treasure and other legitimately acquired wealth belonged by right to the discoverer.[3]

This proclamation was the result of a representation made to the king by a poor young poet who was punished by the subordinate officials. Thus this

was an exception and not the rule. The presents of the hillmen (like those at the Nilgiris) to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ[4] and the tributes by subjugated monarchs were other sources of revenue, though the income from these items could not have been much.

The chief item of expenditure was connected with the civil and the military establishments of the state. An idea of the military expenditure will be apparent from the number of the fourfold army and commissariat which followed Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ on his northern expedition.[5]

1 Canto xv, l. 163.

2 Canto xv, l. 196.

3 Canto xxiii, ll. 128-9.

4 Canto xxv, ll. 35-55.

5 Canto xxvi, ll. 128-40. See also M.
op. cit., p. 134.

Raghava Aiyangar,

INTRODUCTION

WARFARE

We have seen that the army of the

45

100

500

10,000

20,000

1,000

102

208

100

ancient Tamils

consisted of a fourfold classification of chariots,

elephants, cavalry and infantry. The chief defence was by means of well furnished fortifications. The battlements and ram-parts were mechanically provided with efficient mecha- nisms containing curious devices in the shape of monkeys, kingfishers, sows, vultures, serpents, horses and swans.[1]

Before the king left his capital he entertained his soldiers with a grand feast and sent his sword and umbrella on the state elephant in advance, on an auspicious day. After having prayed to the gods in the temples of his city and in the Yajñaśālas the king actually left his town. This was what Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ did on the eve of his nor- thern expedition.[2] Such of the heroes as showed a bold front to the end and died, were honoured with Vīrakkal or Naṭukal, monuments raised in commemoration of their deeds of valour of which a good number are even now brought out by the spade of the archaeologist. Before the actual operations, an ultimatum was

generally sent to the enemy king to the effect that those who did not

1 Canto xv. ll. 206-16.

2 Canto xxvi, ll. 52-66.

voluntarily surrender would have to submit to the horrors of war.[1]

A number of musical instruments were displayed on the field of battle. These were *koṭumpaṟai*, *neṭuvayir*, *muracam*, *pāṇṭil*, etc. The kings who still opposed him in open war were taken prisoners after their defeat and released on their submission. The wars were so fierce

that the soldiers sometimes cast off their arms and escaped in the guise of ascetics, musicians and dancers, Brahmans and other non-combatants.[2] This points to the prevalence of ethical standards in ancient warfare in South India.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Passing on to the department of justice we notice that the chief magistrates who sat in the hall of justice (*Aṟakkaḷam*) when they disposed of cases were Brahmans. The idea was that those dispensing justice must be versed in the law codes.[3]

Though the kings were actuated by the best of motives in meting out justice there was sometimes a miscarriage

as we note in the case of Kōvalaṉ.[4] There were jails and superintendents of jails.[5] As already noticed there was a periodical release of prisoners. Usually capital punishment was awarded in cases of theft. Among others the six chief offenders according to the laws of the state were false witnesses, pseudo-*sannyāsins,* unchaste women, disloyal ministers, adulterers, and tale bearers.[6]

1 Canto xxv, ll. 183-94.

2 Canto xxvii, l. 179 ff.

3 Canto xxii, l. 8; xxvi, l. 246; xxviii, l. 222.

4 Canto xvi, l. 148, ff.

5 Canto xxiii, l. 103. *Maṇi.*, canto zix, l. 133.

6 Canto v, ll. 128-34.

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION

Already we heve seen that the empire was divided into *nāṭus* (perhaps answering to modern provinces) and a sub- division of the *naṭu* was the *kūṟṟam* (district). But the village was the unit of administration.

Every village had a *maṉṟam* or the village *sabhā*, where the elders transacted the business of the village. There were certain tribal settlements in the hills and forests. The Eiyṉar settlement may be cited as an example. Excepting these settlements, the villages in general were not isolated groups far away from the link of humanity. There was active intercourse, political and commercial, between village and village and between village and city. Learned men and pious Brahmans of one kingdom felt at home in alien kingdoms. To cite an instance, the Brahman of Māṅkāṭu, a village in the Cēra *nāṭu*, visited sacred

places as far as Cape Comorin through the Cōḻa and Pāṇṭya kingdoms. In spite of the gloomy trail through woods and jungles the roads were safe. There were officials appointed by the state to look after the welfare of the village, and these were to a large extent responsible for the peace and security of the rural parts. They were often aided by the village assembly.

XI
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The celebrated commentator Naccin̲ārkkin̲iyar divides the whole Tamil land into four divisions: Malaimaṇṭa- lam, Chōḻamaṇṭalam, Pāṇṭyamaṇṭalam, and Toṇṭaimaṇ-
ṭalam. In the days of the *Cilappatikāram* there was no Toṇṭaimaṇṭalam division as such. There were then only three divisions. Malaimaṇṭalam was already referred to as the Cēra kingdom. It

may be noted in passing that

the term *mantalam* in the sense of a province or kingdom does not occur in the Cankam works.

The ancient Cēranāṭu was constituted by modern Salem, Coimbatore, and the Nilgiri districts besides the whole of Malabar and a part of Travancore (Vēḷnāṭu). This kingdom occupied five of the twelve divisions which comprised all the Tamiḻakam. The five of the Cēraman-ṭalam were Kuṭṭanāṭu, Kuṭanāṭu, Koṅkunāṭu, Pūḻināṭu

and Malāṭu (Malaināṭu). Some of the titles of the Cēras like Kuṭṭuvaṉ and Pūḻiyaṉ are coined from the names of these territorial divisions. The ancient Koṅkunāṭu comprised the modern districts of Salem and Coimbatore. The chief rivers of the Cēra kingdom were Āṉporuṉai (Amarāvati), Kuṭavanāṟu, Kāñci (Noyyil), Kāriyāṟu, Cuḷḷiyāṟu,[1] Pēriyāṟu or Poṉṉāṉi, and Bavāṉi or Vāṇi. To this kingdom Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ added by conquest Koṭukūr in the south of the Mysore state. Vañcikkaruvūr[2] was the capital of this great kingdom. Toṇṭi and Muciri were the chief ports.

We are furnished with a full and detailed description of

the capital city, its suburbs, fortifications, streets and roads,
public halls, museums, parks, temples and *maṭams* and
the palace.[3]

The late Kanakasabhai surmised that this Vañci might
be Tiru-karūr now a deserted village three miles from
Kothaimangaḷam and this view has been adopted by some
of the later scholars without bestowing much thought on
this all-important question. This theory did not go un-
challenged. Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar first identified
Vañci with Karuvūr in Tiruchirrapalli district. Following

1 Suḷḷi falls into the western sea; at its mouth is the town
MucIri.

2 Cantos xxvi, l. 50; xxviii, l. 196.

3

Maṇi., canto xxviii; *Sila.*, canto xxviii, ll. 48-50.

him Mahāvidvān R. Raghava Aiyangar, whose authority on the Caṅkam classics cannot be disputed, wrote a book in Tamil entitled *Vañcimānakar*. The long and short of this erudite thesis was to settle once for all the controversy as to the location of the original Cēra capital, and after a critical examination of all the aspects of the question, he came to the only possible conclusion that this Vañcikkaru-

vūr was the present town Karūr in Trichinopoly district.

It is not possible nor is it necessary to traverse the ground again. If epigraphy were pressed into service, the following would be read with interest : 'A damaged record in the Civā temple here (Nerūr, a village very near Karūr) mentions Karuvūr as Vañcimānakaram which must help to settle the identification of the original Vañci at Karūr and not at Cranganore on the west coast.'[1]

The chief mountains are the Kolli hills, the Ayirai hills (in which the Ayirai river has its source), and the chain of Ānamalais. This river Ayirai[2] must be Ponnāṉi

(Pūrṇavakini). The hill Ayirai (Aivar-Malai) was sacred to the goddess Koṟṟavai, the deity of the Cēras. The other hills of the Konkunāṭu are Naṉrā and Vaṇṭamalai, the latter south of Karuvūr,

THE PĀṆṬYAN KINGDOM

It would appear that the ancient Pāṇṭyan kingdom extended far into the south where were the Kumari hill and the river Pahṟuḷi both of which had been swallowed up by the sea long before the commencement of the Christian era.[3] As if to compensate for the loss

1 *Gazetteer of the Trichinopoly District*, Vol. II, 1931, p. 130.

2 Canto xxviii, ll. 145-6.

3 Canto xi, ll. 17-22; see commentary on canto viii, ll. 1-2.

C 4

of this territory, the Pāṇṭyan king Neṭuñceḻiyaṉ added by conquest Miḻalaikkūṟṟam[1] and the Muttūṟkkūṟṟam[2] from the Cōḻas, apparently territories in the modern district of Tanjore,[3] and Kuṇṭūṟkūṟṟam[4] from the Cēras. It is only the gloss that gives this indication, and we have no other testimony to confirm it.[5]

If we are to follow the traditional account of three Caṅkams, and there is no reason why we

should not, the
ancient capital of the Pāṇṭyan kingdom was also swallowed
up by the sea, and this necessitated the moving of the
capital to Korkai, probably the Kavāṭapuram of Sanskrit

1 It is rather difficult to identify this, though South Indian
inscriptions often mention this as part of Pāṇṭināṭu. For instance
a record in the fourteenth year of the Pāṇṭyan king Jaṭāvarman
Sundara Pāṇṭya of the thirteenth contury A.D. refers to it. (See
also Tamil record No. 67 of 1910.) Tamil records Nos 460-1 of
1909 refer to two places, Kīḻkūṟṟu and Kaḷakūṟṟu as subdivisions
of Miḷalaikūṟṟam. Naṭuvirkūṟṟu is another subdivision according
to Tamil records, 130 of 1908 and 425 of 1911.

2 This is also referred to in a number of inscriptions. Tamil
record No. 59 of 1909, dated in the thirteenth year of the Pāṇṭyan

King Jaṭāvarman mentions Muttūrkkūṟṟam in Pāṇṭyamaṇṭalam. See also 441 of 1904, 86 of 1905 and 80 and 266 of 1907. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Kappalūr seems to have been an important place in this subdivision (see Nos. 425 and 429 of 1913).

3 K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Paṇṭyan Kingdom*, p. 28.

4 This can be indentified with Kuṇṭūrkūṟṟam occurring in the Madura inscription of a Pāṇṭyan king whose name is lost. According to this, Kuṇṭūr was the capital of Kuṇṭūrkūṟṟam, and this *kūṟṟam* formed a part of Aṇṭanāṭu (see *I.M.P.*, Vol. II, p. 1036, ed. by V. Rangachary). According to a record of Trichinopoly district, 460 of 1908, it came to be known later as Rājanārāyaṇa-Caturvētimankalam.

5 p. 303.

literature. From this again the capital was transferred to the modern city of Madura, and this had been effected by the time of Pliny as he refers to it.[1] This became the seat of the great and ancient academy well known as the Caṅkam. Koṟkai also continued to be a chief city under the charge of the crown prince. The chief hill in the kingdom was Potiyil, the residence of the sage Agastya if we are to believe the traditional account, and the im-

portant river was the Vaikai which was crossed when in flood by boats and canoes.

The limits of the ancient Pāṇṭyan kingdom may roughly be stated to have comprised the modern districts of Madura, Ramnad and Tinnevelly. The Veḷḷār flowing through the Pudukkottai State formed its northern boundary. The Cōḻa kingdom consisted of a part of the modern Trichinopoly district, as well as Tanjore, Chingleput and South Arcot districts. The Toṇṭaimaṇṭalam which rose to prominence under the Pallavas was an appendage to the old Cōḻamaṇṭalam. It was in its turn divided into a number of *nāṭus* and *kūṟṟams*. Like the

Pāṇṭyan kingdom the Cōḷamaṇṭalam had two capital cities Uṛaiyūr (Sans., Uragapuram) in the Trichinopoly district and Kāverippaṭṭiṇam in the Tanjore district. The latter achieved prominence under Karikālaccōḷaṉ, the son of Iḷamcēṭceṇṇi, but a part of it was destroyed by the sea in the course of two generations. It consequently lost its ancient glory as the principal seat of government.[2]

According to the *Periplus* the capital city Uṛaiyūr was the chief mart for pearls and the well-known Argynitic

1 E. H. Warmington, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India,* 1928, p. 167.

2 For a detailed description of the city, its fortifications, treets and roads, see cantos v and vi.

muslins; Argynitic being an adjective derived from the name Uragapuram. Sixty years later Ptolemy states that Uraiyūr was the capital. The Kāvēri was the only important river of the Cōḷa country.

To conclude, 'the traditional meeting-place of the three Tamil kingdoms was the temple of Cellānṭi Amman on the banks of the Kāvēri, twelve miles west of Kuḷittalai and three miles below the junction of the Amarāvati and the Kāvēri. The temple was the common place of worship of the kings of the three Tamil dynasties; a bund which runs to the south of the river marks the boundary between the Cōḷa and the Pāṇṭya territories, and the Karaipōttaṉār on the opposite bank of the river was the boundary between the Cōḷa and the Cēra kingdoms.'[1]

XII

RELIGIOUS DATA

Man is a religions animal and invokes the assistance of superhuman beings in his weal and woe. This invocation comprises rituals of fasting and feasting, singing and dancing. These are believed to please the deity who in his turn is expected to shower blessings on his worshippers. The chief gods invoked by the ancient Tamils were Sēyōṉ (also Murukaṉ and Vēlaṉ) and Māyōṉ (Kṛishṇa or the Black God). Other gods worshipped were Civā, Koṟṟavai or the Goddess of Victory, Balarāma, Varuna, Indra, etc. There is a view that some of these were peculiar to the different regions (of which five are distinguished) in the Tamil land.[2] But these are also Vēdic and Purāṇic gods, and their mention in early Tamil poetry shows that the assimi-

1 *Gazetteer of the Trichinopoly District*, Vol. II, 1931, p. 67.

2 *See History of the Tamils*, p. 75 ff.

lation and the blend of the two cultures, Sanskrit and Tamil, was a thing of the ancient past. The earliest extant work

in Tamil, the *Tolkāppiyam* bears evidence of this. Similar ideas are found scattered in the *Cilappati- kāram*, and the twin epics betray clear influence of the Buddha and the Jaina cults which had come to stay in the Tamil land.

Side by side with these dissenting sects of which three are mentioned—the Buddha, the Jaina and the Ājīvaka, the established religion of the land was in a flourishing condition. At the outset, it must be remarked that there was no nice distinction between the orthodox religion and the so-called religion of the dissenting sects. The funda- mental principle of all these sects were the same, and the differences, if any, were minor and trivial. It was in philosophical outlook and speculation that there was any difference, and hence the masses of the people to whom the higher philosophy was a sealed book did not trouble them- selves about it. The religious discussions were only among the cultured few, and differences in opinions and views among them were treated with mutual respect. By the orthodox religion we mean Caivism and Vaishṇavism. Even here the bitter hatred of the Caivā and

Vaishṇavā cults as separate sects, which was only a later growth on the tree of Indian religion, is totally absent in the *Cilappatikāram*.

It is not possible to say whether in the days of the epic a certain person was a Caivā or Vaishṇavā in his creed, and hence he cannot be marked exclusively a Caivā or exclusively a Vaishṇava. In fine, the sectarian spirit was totally absent, and every person was both a Caivā and a Vaishṇava. Mādari, a devotee of Kṛishṇa and hence a Vaishṇavā paid respects to Kavunti-Aṭigaḷ, a Jain *sannyā- sini*.

A classic example is Cēran Ceṅtuṭṭuvan himself. Besides his prayers at the Agnihōtraśāla of his palace on the eve of his expedition to the north, the king went to the Civa temple and bore the feet of the Lord on his head as a mark of respect to Him. At this time the priests of the temple of Āṭakamāṭam, the local Vaishṇavā temple, gave him the *prasādam* (garland of flowers) which he wore on his shoulders. The commentator has identified Āṭakamāṭam with the Trivandrum Padmanābhasvāmi temple. But as Pandit R. Raghava Aiyangar has ably argued that once the thesis that Karūr was the capital of the Cēras is established, it could not be that priests came all the way from Trivandrum to Karūr, and that therefore we must look for the temple in or near Karūr.[1] Therefore this must be the Ranganātha temple in Karūr, while the Civā temple must have been the Pacupatikōil of that place.[2]

The epic also mentions the great shrines dedicated to Subrahmaṇya like Tiruccendūr, Tiruccengōḍe, Ērakam and Veṇkuṉru.[3] The dances *tuṭikkūttu* and *kuṭaikkūttu* are attributed to Subrahmaṇya as the *koṭukoṭṭi* and the *pāṇṭaraṅkam* are to Civā.

The worship of the Dēvi as the Korravai or the Goddess of Victory and to Maṇimēkalai as the chief guardian deity of the sea is seen throughout. The idea that Lakshmī, Sarasvatī and Pārvatī represent different aspects of the same Power is evident from the *veṇpā* in Canto xxii. This reminds us of the Lalitōpākhyāna portion

1 *Vāṉcimānakar*; cf. canto xxvi, commentary on l. 62; *T.A.S.*, Vol. V. p. 116.

2 Dikshitar also visited this ancient town and is inclined to confirm the learned pandit's opinion.

3 Canto xxiv, p. 516

of the *Brahmāṇṭa Purāṇa* where it is stated that the original goddess at Kāñci was Mahālakshmī who came to be known in latter times as Kāmākshī. The ritual dance *vēṭṭuvavari* in honour of Korravai was often performed by hill

tribes like the Maṛavar. The opening lines of Canto xii, in fact the whole canto, describe this dance, and in this connexion we find that among the *pali* (offerings) mentioned human and bloody sacrifices were not uncommon.[1] The Tēvi is often praised as the destroyer of Mahiṣāsura.

The ritual dance connected with Vishṇu goes by the name of the *kuravaikkūttu* (probably Sans., Rāsakrīḍa). This kind of dance was largely performed by the female members of the community in honour of the god Kṛishṇa who, tradition affirms, married the cowherdess Piṉṉai in the same way that Murukaṉ married Vaḷḷi, a hill girl. When Kōvalaṉ was executed under the orders of the Pāṇṭyan king, the city was visited with a number of ill omens which indicated some disaster to the city and its residents. According to the belief of the times such things could be averted by invoking deities dear to them. Hence a *kuravaikkūttu* was arranged by Mātari and her daughter Aiyai in the presenee of Kaṇṇaki. Another *kuravaikkūttu* was performed by the women of the hill tribes on the Neṭuvēḷkuṉṟam, the hill which Kaṇṇaki reached after the conflagration at Madura, and where, as she stood under the *vēṅkai* tree, a celestial car came down and took her

to Heaven. In honour of Kaṇṇaki; these ladies arranged a dance and performed it with success.

Connected with the worship of Kṛishṇa was the worship of Balarāma, his elder brother. That there was a cult of Balarāma is obvious from the mention of a separate

1 See in this connexion E. A. Payne, *The Sāktas*, introductory chapter.

temple to him.[1] Prof. R. G. Bhandarkar is of opinion that the cult of Balarāma was known in Patañcali's time. It is not clear when the cult became extinct.[2] It is remarkable that the worship of Balarāma was

in vogue in Tamil South India in the time of the *Cilappatikāram*.[3]

Again, we find evidence in the *Cilappatikāram* of the existence of separate temples to the Sun God, the Moon God, the Kalpa Tree, the Airāvada, the Vajra, Cāttaṉ, and other Pācaṇṭa gods.[4] In the cities were found local shrines for the guardian deities. Such definite statements as to the existence of temples bear testimony to the fact that the institution of the temple had a much more ancient origin than that we would at present imagine. Evidence is not altogether lacking that temples existed in India in the fourth millenium B. C. as the recent

finds of the Indus Valley indicate. Again, the four Pūtams named after the four castes and the Pūta at the Pūtacatukkam were also offered prayers. Among the Vēdic deities Indra, Varuṇa and Agni are invoked. In more than one place, there are references to Vēdic Brahmans, their fire-rites, and their chanting of the Vēdic

1 Canto ix, 1, 10.

2 See his *Saivism, Vaiṣṇavism, and minor religious systems*, p. 13.

3 Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri drew my attention to a temple of Balarāma at Uḍabhanēśvaram on the seashore at a short distance from Uḍupī, dedicated by Sri Madhavācārya, worship being conducted there down to the present time.

An image of Balarāma said to be a typical example of the Kushāna period, is one of the acquisitions noted in the *An. Rep.* of the U. P. Provincial Museum, Lucknow, for the year ending 1930.

4 Canto ix, ll. 9-15.

hymns. The Brahman received much respect from the king and was often given gifts of wealth and cattle. The *purōhita* (*āšāṉ*) held a high status among the chief officials of the state, and he was a member of the cabinet which the king consulted on matters affecting the state. This is not unnatural as the Tamil kings claimed to be Kšhatriyas and the literary tradition connected them with the Solar and Lunar races.

Among the deities of the heretical sects, viz. the Pācaṇtas, of whom the *Tivākaram* distinguishes as many as ninety-six sects, the Cāttaṉ is

prominently mentioned.

Even now remains of these old Śāsta temples are found

in the boundary limits of villages, and people in distress

invoke their aid to tide over their difficulties. As now,

in olden days the temples of these deities were frequently

visited by distressed people and their wishes were granted.

These Śāsta temples appear to be indigenous to South

India, where they are largely found, especially in the

Tamil districts. But in the age of the *Cilappatikāram*

owing to the impact of Sanskrit culture the Śāsta cult was

apparently treated as heretical in character.[1]

We do not propose to deal fully

with the three dissenting sects of Hinduism to which reference has already been made. There are references to the Buddha, the Intravikāra of Pukār, and the Māpōti,[2] but the references to Buddhism which can be gleaned from the epic are very few. This is probably because the other epic *Maṇimē-*

1 It is interesting to note in this connexion that Śāsta or Mahāśāsta is the son born of Civa when He embraced Mōkini (Vishṇu in disguise), and hence he is called Hariharaputra. According to Aṭiyārkkunallār and the *Tivākaram* another name for Cāttaṉ is Cātavākanaṉ.

2 Canto x, ll. 11-14.

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kalai gives a full treatment of the subject. In the same

way there are but few references to the Camaṇa sect, the Ājivaka, and to know what it is, one has to turn again to the pages of the *Maṇimēkalai*. It may be remarked in passing that all these sects were patronized by Aśōka, the Mauryan Emperor.

Some details about the Jaina practices and customs are also furnished by the *Cilappatikāram*. From a study of Canto xv one is tempted to conclude that Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki followed the Jain practice of bathing and clothing and eating. In fact they did so at Mātari's house. But the evidence of the *Maṇimēkalai* shows that they were Buddhists. As has already been said the distinctions

between the orthodox religion and the other sects were not sharp. While Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was of the orthodox faith, his brother Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ is at least contended to have been a Jaina, and the poet Kūlavāṇikaṉ Cāttaṉār, their common friend, was a Buddhist. This is not peculiar to South India. We know, for example, that members of Harṣha's family 'acted on their individual preferences in the matter of religion'. While Prabhākaravardhana, Harṣha's father, followed the worship of the Sun, his elder on Rājyavardhana was a Buddhist. Harṣha worshipped the Sun, Buddha and Civā. And yet there was no con-

flict of interests among them.[1] Again while the parents of Kōvalaṉ were Buddhists, those of Kaṇṇaki embraced the Ājīvaka faith.[2] Thus different members of the same household followed different faiths and there was no sectarian spirit among them.

1 V. A. Smith, *The Early History of India*, 4th ed., revised by S. M. Edwardes, pp. 358-9. See also R. K. Mookerjee, *Harsha* (Rulers of India Series).

2 Canto xxvii, ll. 90-100.

Only two explanations can be offered for this. Either the people did not look upon religious distinctions seriously, or there were no fundamental differences between one sect and another. To every one of them, *karma* was a factor to be reckoned with. Man's actions bad or good are bound to yield results bad or good. Suffering in this birth may not necessarily be due to unrighteous acts done now but may be the result of past actions. Hence man must do his duty (*svadharma*) if he wants to attain salvation. The people in those days seem to have pinned their faith to this doctrine as many do even now.

Before we close this section it is worth noting that of all the Vēdic gods, the worship of Indra is prominently mentioned. In fact the whole of Canto v of the epic is devoted to a detailed description of the festival of Indra and festivities connected with it. It would appear from the canto that the king interested himself in celebrating - that

festival with grand success, and to witness it, gods and men came even from remote parts of North India. It was an annual festival lasting for a number of days. It commenced on the full moon day in the month of Cittirai (April), and with the preliminary worship of the guardian deity who was sent by Indra to help an ancient king of the Pukār line, Mucukunta. Sacrifices were offered in the five different *maṉṟams* of the city of Pukār.[1] One feature of the festival was the removal of the drum from the Vajrakkōṭṭam to the Airāvata temple, where it was placed on the nape of the elephant sacred to Indra. The bathing ceremony of Indra was the important day of the festival. We hear of the Indradhvajam festival in Sans- krit literature[2] which can be identified with the ceremony

1 ll. 140-4.

2 E.g. *Vīramitrōdaya Rājanītiprakāśa*,

pp. 421-33.

of *talaikkōl* in Tamil literature, but there was no actual celebration of Indra's festival. How the ancient Tamils took to this special form of Indra's worship still remains a puzzle.

XIII

SOCIAL CONDITIONS: TOWNS AND TOWN LIFE

If the *Maṇimēkalai* can be characterized a philosophico-religious work, the *Cilappatikāram* can be said to be a treatise on political and social life.[1] Here we have a description of the three capitals with their glowing culture and civilization. In the busy streets of the cities any

number of people belonging to various nations were met, most of them having come on commercial and other business. The municipal administration was excellent. The roads and streets were kept in good condition and were lighted. Committing nuisance in public streets was punishable. The houses seem to have been well built and properly provided with ventilation. Seven-storied buildings were not uncommon in the ancient cities, thus pointing to a considerable development of engineering skill in ancient South India. Among the communities the Brahmans received much respect especially for their learning in the sacred lore and for their continuance of the fire-rites. They were often awarded rich presents both in cash and kind. They were left unmolested during times of war, as was the case during Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's battle on the banks of the Ganges. Next came the merchant community, and being the wealthiest community its members were honoured with titles by the reigning chieftains of the land.

1 As Dikshitar has devoted a long chapter to this question in his book *Studies in Tamil Literature*

and History only a baer outline is given here,

Life in towns was one of luxury and ease. Some of

the amusements of the people were dumb-shows and

dancing accompanied by music, both vocal and instrumen-

tal. Women freely participated in such amenities of life.

They attended temples and took part in the public dances.

They decked themselves with costly attire and ornaments

and made themselves attractive. Their clothes were of

cotton, wool, silk, and even rat's hair.[1] One mode of their decoration was the painting of their bodies with scented pastes and powders and the wearing of garlands of flowers.

The womenfolk in towns can be classified into two divisions : housewives attending to household duties and leading pure lives, and prostitutes who were public women living in special quarters where the voluptuous young men of the city thronged. Even married men resorted to these places and wasted all their wealth on these courtesans, caring little for their wedded wives. A typical example

is Kōvalaṉ who spent all his fortune on Mātavi the dancing-girl, as a result of which he became so poor that he had to go to Madura to earn a living. Outside the city in the suburbs, were public places which were the residences of ascetics and penance–performers, both orthodox and heterodox.

VILLAGES AND VILLAGE LIFE

If the town life was rich, the village life was equally so. The villagers, of whom the agriculturists, cowherds and shepherds formed the majority, led a simple life attending to their hereditary professions of cultivation and cattle-tending. The villages were not altogether cut off from the activities of town life. There were means of

1 Canto xiv, ll. 205-7, comm.

transport which were, primarily, bullock-carts on land and boats on water. Between the villages, or more properly between two great towns, thick forests abounded with wild animals and serpents, streams and springs of water, fruit trees and trees of other kinds, cornfields and flower gardens. Iḷanko-Aṭigaḷ gives us a vivid picture of all this when describing the route from ancient Pukār to Madura-[1]

The monotonous life of the villager was often enlivened by rural amusements of a varied character. Every

village had a common dancing-hall (*kaḷam*).[2] Even the village women took part in these public performances like the *tuṇaṅkai*, a kind of dance.[3] Having enough to eat and drink, the villagers led a contented and happy life.

Notwithstanding the security and peace afforded by the kings of the land, theft was not uncommon. The Maṟavar who lived in forests and desert tracts, otherwise known as the Eiyṉar, who were often employed as soldiers in wars by the Tamil kings, had for their chief profession highway robbery[4]. They often deprived the unwary wayfarer of his belongings: cattle lifting was one feature of their thieving. They were addicted to liquor

and ate fiom

a common table. They hunted the wild hog, boar and

deer, whose flesh they ate, using their skins as clothes

and their ivory teeth and nails as ornaments.

MARRIAGE

Another aspect of social life deserving notice is mar-

riage. In the ancient Tamiḻakam two forms of marriage

1 Cantos x-xi.

2 *Maṇi.*, canto iv, l. 6.

3 Canto v, l. 70.

4 See also Dikshitar's paper 'The Eiyṉar' XXXI, No. 1.

in *Sentamil*, Vol.

were prevalent, the *kaḷvau* and the *kaṟpu*

(i.e. marriage in secrecy and marriage in the open). It was a peculiar custom of the *kaḷavu* that the lover secretly met the unmarried girl of his choice and made overtures of love to her. This roughly corresponds to the *gandharva* form of marriage. The lover usually came bearing a present in his hand as a token of his love. It was one of the divisions of the *kaikkiḷai* form of love.[1] The whole of the canto 'Kāṉalvari' is a dissertation on the different stages of the *kaḷavu* from of marriage.[2] The *kaṟpiyal* from which had already taken the place of the *kaḷaviyal*, from the epoch of the *Tolkāppiyam* if not earlier,[3]
had come to stay by the time of the epics. Though there are details of the *kaḷavu* form of marriage, it seems to have been confined to certain communities such as those living near the seaside or those living in the hills. In other words, the people in the lower stages of culture adopted it. In the

more civilized parts of the land, the form of marriage was that laid down in the *Dharmasāstras* and the *Grhyasūtras*. The chanting of the Vēdic mantras by the *purōhita*, the circumambulation of fire and similar customs show the profound influence which Sanskrit culture had on the Tamils. If the Tamils took to northern customs of marriage, the northerners who settled in the Tamil land also adopted some of the Tamil practices in their system of marriage. The tying of *tāli* (*māṅkalyam*) or a sacred thread to the neck of the bride by the bridegroom is an instance in point. There is no warrant in the ancient law- codes for this practice. It is a practice of the Tamils copied in later times by the

so-called Aryans. This is another

1 *Tolk.*, 'Porul', *sūtrams* 104-6.

2 For further details see canto xxvi, 'Kuṉrakkuravai'.

3 *Tolk.*, 'Kaṟpiyal', *sūtra* 4.

instance of the harmonious fusion of the two ancient cultures.[1]

MUSIC AND DANCING

Passing on, we meet with a wealth of material for an elaborate study of music and dancing. There was ritual singing and ritual dancing. Dancing as a part of religious worship is in evidence among the ancient peoples. It is said[2] that 'in early Christianity bishops led the faithful in the sacred dances both in the

churches and before the tombs of the martyrs'. We also hear that the Tarahumare Indians of Mexico regard the dance as 'a very serious and ceremonial matter, a kind of worship and incantation rather than amusement.'

A dance conducted with the intention of moving the deity becomes a real form of prayer and this is in evidence in the Tamil classic. In addition there were dumb-shows; but there is no evidence of any regular play having been enacted.

The *Cilappatikāram* furnishes the legendary origin of dancing. Once in the *sabhā* of Indra, his son Jayanta misbehaved with the heavenly actress Ūrvaci, in a manner

that enraged the sage Agastya who cursed Jayanta to be born a bamboo stick in the Vindhya hills, and Ūrvacī a courtesan on the earth. Hence the name Jayanta is celebrated in the ceremony and worship of *talaikkōl*. It was a bamboo stick symbolical of Jayanta. Often the handle of the umbrella of an enemy-king was used as the *talaikkōl*.

1 The marriage of Kaṇṇaki and Kōvalaṉ is a description of marriage in high life See canto i for the preliminaries, the *pantal*, the religious and social functions ending with the *āśirvāta* rites.

2 E. Crawley, *The Mystic Rose*, Vol, 1, 1927, p. 371.

It was duly bathed and adorned and carried in procession before it was finally taken to the public theatre. The actress for the day placed it on her head perhaps to serve as an equipoise when regular dancing began.

The worship of Murukaṉ and Māyōṉ included dancing as a relieving feature of the occasion. The former is the war - god and the latter the love-god. But a number of dances are associated with gods like Śiva, Durgā, Indrāṇi, besides Murukaṉ and Kṛishṇa. Aṭiyārkkunallār informs us that Kṛishṇa danced ten kinds of dances[1] (of which *alliyak- kūttu*, *mallāṭal*, and *kuṭakkūttu* are mentioned in the text) after his victory over Kamsa, Bāṇāsura, and after the

release of Aniruddha. Iḷankō-Aṭikaḷ refers to the dances of Śiva, Murukan Kāma, Durgā, Lakshmī, and Indrāṇī. Śiva is said to have danced the *koṭukoṭṭi* and *pāṇṭarankam* dances after the burning of the Tripura (Three Cities) in the presence of Brahmā who was his charioteer at that time.[2] Murukan is said to have danced the *tuṭi* after exposing the deceit of Śūrāsura; Kāma (the God of Love) the dance of Hermaphrodite; Durgā the dance of *marakkāl* after vanquishing the *asuras*; Lakṣhmī (the Goddess of Wealth) the dance of *pāvai* after her victory over the *asuras*; Indrāṇī the *kaṭayam* after defeating Bāṇāsura. But it is difficult to find similar references to these dances in Sanskrit literature. Of the eleven kinds of dancing,[3] two divisions are distinguished: *nilaininrāṭal* (a dance fixing oneself in a particular station); and *pātam viḻntāṭal*. Six dances like the *alliyam* constitute the first division and five like the *tuṭi* the second division.

1 Canto vi, l, 46 ff.

2 ibid., l. 39 ff.

3 ibid., l. 65, comm.

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In addition to these are the *kuravaikkū tu* so elabo- rately explained in the epic and performed by the women of the cowherd and other communities. It is said that Krishṇa and Piṇṇai once engaged in that kind of dance. There was also the *kūttu* of the Maṛavar in honour of Koṛṛavai. The *Cilappatikāram* shows an advanced state of evolution in the art of dancing. From primitive ritual dancing, it became transformed into a mere form of secular amusement. This must have been due to the profound influence exerted by the classic works like the *Bharatanāṭyasāstra*. The

term *tēsikkūttu* in the 'Aran- kērrukātai' will itself explain the indigenous as opposed to the alien forms of dancing introduced into the Tamil country. In explaining the technical terms the commen- tator quotes as authorities such authors as Ceyirriyanār, Mativāṇar, Baratacēṇāpatiyār, Kuṇanūlutaiyār, Jayanta-nūluṭaiyār.

From a study of relevant portions of our epic, the *kūttus* may be broadly classified into *vēttiyal* and *potu- viyal.* Another classification was *cāntikkūttu* and *vinōtak-kūttu.*[1] Dancing was always to the accompaniment of music.
The *Cilappatikāram* belongs to the class of *icait- tamiḻ*, in the sense that it has six cantos on music— 'Arankērrukātai', 'Kāṇalvari', 'Vēṇirkātai', 'Āycciyar- kuravai', 'Kunrakkuravai' and 'Vēṭṭuvavari'. Melody is fully realized as the basis of Hindu music. The structure of the musical modes or *rāgas* rests invariably on a sys- tem of seven notes. W. W. Hunter remarks: 'It is

indeed impossible to adequately represent the Indian system by the European notation; and the full range of its effects can only be rendered by Indian instruments, a vast collection of sound producers, slowly elaborated

1 For details see Aṭiyārkkunallār's commentary, pp. 79-80.

during 2,000 years to suit the special requirements of Hindu Music.'[1]

South Indian music, usually called Karnāṭaka music seems to follow largely the theory, modes and notation of early Sanskrit musicians. But still in many

respects it differs from them and maintains a distinct individuality unbroken for centuries together. Refinements were introduced from time to time in the original *rāgas*[2].

It would be an interesting study to examine the ancient theory of music, and its practice by means of musical instruments in use.[3] But it is so technical in character that it is rather difficult to understand the full significance of the text in spite of elaborate commentaries on it. *Isai* is the technical term for music and singing, secular and religious, and may be vocal or instrumental or both. Suffice it here to say that the ancient

Tamils like the
ancient Greeks had a highly developed art of music.[4]

There were musicians of both sexes. The male singers
were known as *pāṉars* and female singers as *viralis* and
pāṭinis. They went from place to place displaying their
musical talents and thus earning their livelihood. In
addition to these professionals the ancient Tamils were
lovers of music. Four varieties of tunes—*paṇ*, *paṇṇiyaṟ-*
ṟiram, *tiṟam*, *tiṟattiṟam*—were developed, appropriate per-
haps to each of the four regions into which the whole
Tamil land was divided. The 'Araṅkēṟṟukātai' (canto iii)

The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. VI, 'India', p. 111.

2 See introduction to M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar's *Svaramēḷa-kalānidhi*.

3 For a collection of important extracts from the epic see M. Abraham Pandithar's *Karunāmṛtasāgaram*, 1917, pp. 526 ff.

4 For a short history of music, see W. J. Turner's *Music* in 'The How and Why Series'.

is a treatise by itself of the various aspects of musical science. Besides the text, the commentary throws welcome light without which it is not possible to make out anything of the ancient modes of Tamil music.

The qualifications of the songster, the drummer, the flutist, and the *vīṇā* player are described in elaborate detail. The songster must possess the instinct to group and develop the notes by distinguishing the foreign from the indigenous.[1]

He and his assistants like the drummer must be versed in *nāṭaka* literature which is divided into two parts, one relating to the king and the court, and the other relating to the common people. The drummer had to adjust his performance to that of the songster so that the latter might not feel the strain, nor the audience the monotony of the pure song. He supplied the deficiencies of

the vocalist and the instrumentalist by appropriately swelling or reducing the sound of the drum. His skill much depended on the practice of his hand.[2] The flutist was a practised hand in what was known as *cittirappuṇarppu* which was nasalizing the hard consonants in singing a musical piece. He must be an expert in the use of his fingers.[3]

The *vīṇā* player[4] must be versed in fourteen *pālais*, four pertaining to the lower key, seven to the medium and three to the higher. In this way he adjusted the sound.

From a study of Canto iii in the *Cilappatikāram* three kinds of musical performance can be

distinguished—

1 Canto iii, ll. 30-8.

2 ibid., ll. 45-55.

3 ibid., ll. 56-69.

4 idib., ll. 70-94.

the *viṇa*, the flute and the vocal. The musician exhibited
his skill either by playing on the *viṇa* or flute, or by sing- ing, but in all cases he was accompanied by the low- voiced *mirutnkam* and similar instruments. Four kinds of *viṇa* are referred to by the
commentator—*pēriyāḷ*,
makarayāḷ, *sakōṭayāḷ*, *senkōṭṭiyāḷ*. The *yāḷ*

was distinguished by the number of its strings. The flute was classified into five types according to the material of which it was made: bamboo, sandalwood, bronze, red catechu and ebony. Of these bamboo was the best, bronze middling while sandalwood and the others were inferior. The flute had seven holes for the seven *svaras*—sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, da, ni Seven fingers were pressed into service when playing on the flute.[1] The seven fingers are three of the left hand leaving out the thumb and the small finger, and four of the right hand leaving out the thumb.

Of percussion instruments, which were generally hit with a stick and were accompaniments for any performance, thirty-one kinds were distinguished. All of them were made of stretched skins.[2]

A qualified actress went through seven years' training

from her fifth year to her twelfth, and exhibited her skill on the public stage to win the appreciation and approval of the king [3]

XIV
SUPERSTITIONS

The remark has been made already that the ancient Tamils were, like all ancient peoples, god-fearing, simple,

1 p. 101,

2 *Studies in Tamil Literature*, p. 299-n.

3 For the construction of the stage, ibid., 295-6.

superstitious, and almost ready to take things for granted.

That they had a number of deities and that they sent their

prayers to the gods in their daily life has been indicated in the foregoing pages. It was an age of crude astrology, and its aid was sought whenever any one fell ill and sickness persisted. This was especially so when girls were stricken with love-sickness. Little knowing that their unmarried daughters were under the frenzy of love, their parents treated them for one sickness or another. The final relief came, of course, only with the marriage of the girl. Side by side with this, the ancient Tamils attached much importance to dreams. There was the belief that a dream foreshadowed coming fortune or misfortune. It was believed that a dream,

as they re-
membered it, would come true at some future time.

Kaṇṇaki had an evil dream which she communicated to Tēvanti; and the Pāṇṭyan queen dreamt a horrid dream on the eve of the conflagration at Madura, of which she informed her husband, the king Neṭuñceḻiyaṉ.[1] There was in existence a treatise on dreams which foretold the results of dreams, good or bad. Aṭiyārkkunallār quotes from that book in his commentary.[2]

We may draw one or two references from the text to show how the ancient Tamils were superstitious. The *nāṭkōḷ* and the practice of *parasthānam* on an auspicious

day on the eve of starting on distant expeditions or other parts of the country may be cited. The appearance of a hump-backed bull from an opposite direction when setting out on any business was supposed to lead to calamity.[3]

The following among others were supposed to spell disaster

1 Canto xx. ll. 1-12.

2 p. 408.

3 Canto xvi, ll. 100-101.

to the State: The falling down of the sceptre and the royal umbrella of their own accord; the appearance of Indra's bow (a rainbow) at night, and the falling of stars during

the day-time, were regarded as omens[1] foretelling that some evil was in store for the ruling house and even for the kingdom. They had faith in gods and goddesses flying in the air to give aid to the distressed, such as the shipwrecked, and they also heard with faith the prea- chings of Cāraṇas, Yakṣas and other divinities whose feet did not of course touch the earth. Faith in the efficacy of mantras like the *pañcākṣara* and *aṣṭākṣara* was ,widespread. Belief in evil spirits who made a feast of dead and wounded bodies, and also frequented burial grounds, is attested to. The ancient Tamils had their own belief in expiatory cere- monies; for example, Kōvalaṉ helped in her *prāyascittam* (expiation) the Brahman lady who killed the mungoose. They took purificatory baths in sacred pools of water and give lavish gifts in cash and kind to the deserving, all of which, it was believed, would stand them in good stead in their lives after death.

It is significant that there was a treatise on theft

known as *Karavaṭam*, to which the state goldsmith referred in his argument with the executioners of Kōvalaṉ.[2]

The existence of a high degree of excellence in the art of painting is clear from the reference to *Ōviyanūl*, to the different aspects and modes of painting, and the large use of it on walls of houses and on stage curtains. In this connexion the commentator furnishes notes from the *Nāṭakanūl*, *Pañcabāratīyam* and other works now lost to us.
The carving out of Kaṇṇaki's image and the building of temples, *paḷḷis*,

and *kōṭṭams* also substantiate the view

1 Canto xx, l. 1 ff.

2 Canto xvi, l. 189.

that sculpture and architecture were developed to the same high degree as the other fine arts, such as music and dancing. In fact, mention is made of all the sixty-four arts known to the Tamils.[1]

XV

TRACES OF ARYAN CULTURE

The life described in the *Cilappatikāram* is generally

permeated by Aryan concepts and Aryan religious ideas.

This is also true of Cankam works like the *Tolkāppiyam*,

the *Narrinai*, the anthologies of the *Akanāṉūṟu* and the

Puranānūru. It is evident that the Tamil imagination has

been from early times influenced by Aryan

culture. It can

be safely asserted that in the Cankam age the original Tamil culture was transformed into a synthesis of Sanskrit and Tamil elements. The author of the *Cilappatikāram* must have had first-hand knowledge of the Sanskrit works on drama and music as well as of the Epics, and the Purāṇas.

The following among the many may be cited as instances of Aryan influence in South India.

(i) The opening lines of the first chapter are laudatory of Sūrya, Candra, Indra, and Varuṇa of the Vēdic literature.[2]

(ii) In the first chapter again we find that the marriage rites of Kōvalan

and Kaṇṇaki

were performed in the Aryan fashion with

the help of a learned Brahman *purōhita.*[3]

1 Vātsyāyan's *Kāmasūtra*, Bk. I. § 3, st 14-5, comm.

2 For similar references see *Tolk.*, *Kalittokai*, st. 141. 'Porul', *sūtra* 88;

3 *Māmutupārppāṉ maṟaivaḷi kāṭṭiṭa tīvalam ceyvatu,* canto 1, ll. 52-3.

The bridegroom went around the fire as

enjoined[1] by the *Gṛhyasūtras* on Vaiśyas, and Kōvalaṉ was a Vaiśya. The fire-cult had been introduced into the Tamil country in much earlier times,[2] and the monarchs of old engaged in Vēdic Yajñas or sacrifices. Instances of this are not lacking. We have the Cōḻa Rājasūyamvēṭṭa Perunaṟkiḷḷi, the Cēra Celkeḻu-kuṭṭuvaṉ, the Pāṇṭya Palyākaśālai-Mutukuṭumi.[3]

(iii) There is again a reference to the region of Uttarakurus or the *Bhōgabhūmi* of Sanskrit literature in Canto ii of the epic and

elsewhere, and the *Patirruppattu* speaks[4] of Pālai-Kautamanār going to Heaven in human form helped by his king Palyānaic-celkelu-kuṭṭuvan.

(iv) The general description of dancing and music, the dance of Mātavi in particular before the Cōla king, and the very names Mātavi, Citrāpati, and Mātari lead us to infer that the author is indebted to Aryan ideas. Though the *yāḻ* is a characteristic Tamil instrument, the art and science of dancing reveal borrowings from an alien

culture.

(v)

The reference to the *sūta* and the *māgadha*[5] among the establishment of the royal

1 *C. H. I.*, Vol. I, p. 233.

2 *Tolk.*, 'Porul', *sūtra* 92.

3 *Puṟam.*, st. 6 and 12.

4 See also third Ten.

5 Canto v, l. 48. For similar references see the *Matu- raikkāñci*, a composition of Māṅkuṭi Marutaṉār whose contem-

household may point to the introduction of another Aryan institution.

(vi) The epic mentions deities like Siva, Baladēva, Subrahmany, Vishṇu and Indra, and their worship, in more than one place.[1]

To conclude, the dissemination of Aryan culture was largely brought about by that class of wandering mendicant whose business was to spread the light of knowledge from one part of the country to another. The exposition of the Purāṇa is spoken of as *tiṟavōruraikkum-ceyal*[2] and it was expounded by ascetics who made the outskirts of the city their residence.

From the foregoing discussion it can be noted that there is nothing in the *Cilappatikāram* which would mark it off from the cultural point of view as a poem belonging to an age different from that of the *Puṟanāṉūṟu, Akanāṉūṟu, Eṭṭuttokai, Pattuppāṭṭu* or even the *Tolkāppiyam*. If detailed references are lacking in these works it is due to the difference in the themes of each respective composition. If the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* and *Akanāṉūṟu* do not furnish us with religious data, it is because they were sung to earn the patronage of chieftains by eulogizing, sometimes unduly their achievements. There is however the

Paripāṭal, where a poet like Nallantuvaṉār shows himself versed in Vēdic and Purāṇic lore.[3]

poraneity with Talaiyālaṅkānattup-pāṇṭyan is unmistakable. See *Puṟam*, st. 72.

1 Cantos v, ix and xiv.

2 Canto v, ll. 179-81.

3 E.g., the opening lines of poem 8; cf. also poem 3.

XVI

THE AUTHOR OF THE POEM

Iḷankō was the younger son of king

Cēralātan, and his elder brother was the Cēra king Ceṅkuṭṭuvan celebrated in the *Cilappatikāram*. The word Iḷaṅkō means the younger prince, and perhaps it was more a title than a proper name. But what his real name was we cannot say with any certainty. This young prince, who belonged to a distinguished family connected by marriage alliances with the other ruling dynasties of South India and who was blessed with fortune and wealth, was destined to give up the pleasures of royalty and to take to a life of renunciation and self-sacrifice. This came to pass as follows.

One day, when the king Cēralātaṉ was sitting in the

audience hall, there came to the court an astrologer who

predicted the immediate death of the reigning monarch

and the passing of the throne to his younger son. It

was an age of faith in astrology. The prediction was

a rude shock to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, the elder son of the king

and the heir-apparent to the throne. Iḷaṅkō noticed this,

and in order that his brother might enjoy the honour

attached to the throne, became a monk so that he could

not be king.[1] The assumption of holy orders was

to assure his brother that he would not stand to the

way of his hopes and aspiration. As a monk should, he left his palace for the *kōṭṭam* (usually situated in a suburb); and his residence came to be called Kuṇavāyir-kōṭṭam.[2]

1 Some biographers of Aśōka have misunderstood the real significance of Indian monastic life, and have wrongly styled h m monk-emperor.

2 Canto xxx, ll. 174-85.

IḶAṄKŌ, THE HISTORIAN

Iḷaṅkō led a secluded life, but a few scholars visited him now and then. His friend and companion was Kūlavāṇikaṉ Cittalai Cāttaṉār, the celebrated Caṅkam poet and the great author of the *Maṇimēkalai*, another epic of no mean repute to which references have already been made. From the *Patiṟṟuppattu* and other Caṅkam works like the *Puranānūru* and

Akanāṉūṟu anthologies, we gain an idea of the contemporary poets and scholars. Paraṇar to whom is attributed the fifth Ten was a contemporary of Iḷaṅkō. So also were Kapilar and others. Well qualified for the task as a member of an important royal family of the Tamil land, Iḷaṅkō, in his retirement, wrote what may be called a contemporary history of the three chief Tamil dynasties, and even planned to continue the epic *Maṇimē-kalai* himself. But having heard that Cāttaṉār had begun and completed the work, he contented himself with the composition of the *Cilappatikāram.*[1] Like the other poets of his age, he did not go from court to court eulogizing one chieftain after another. Iḷaṅkō's task was to write a

history, and if we bear in mind the impartiality with which he has described the Cōḷa and the Pāṇṭya chiefs, one has to conclude that he has in no way exaggerated the achievements of his brother. Thanks, then, to Iḷaṅkō, we have reliable material for reconstructing the history of the period.

HIS RELIGION

We need not enter again into the controversy regarding the age in which Iḷaṅkō lived. From what we have said of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ it follows that Iḷaṅkō also must be assigned to the latter half of the second century A.D. But

1 See the *patikam* to the *Cilappatikāram*.

far more important is the question of his religious faith. The term Kuṇavāyiṛkōṭṭam is interpreted by Aṭiyarkkunallār as Arukaṉkōil, the name generally given to the Jaina temples. From this and from the term Aṭikaḷ being used as a suffix to his name, the late Mr. Kanakasabhai opined that Iḷaṅkō was a monk of the Nirgrantha sect of the Jains.[1]

But this question is largely interwoven with the faith adopted and adhered to by his brother Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ. Aṭikaḷ is a term of respect, and is in use even today among

saints, seers and holy men to whatever faith they may belong. Again, the term *kōṭṭam* is a general name for temple, and cannot be said to denote particularly a Jaina temple. [2]

While we are examining this question it is necessary to call in the testimony of another datum that goes to establish his religion beyond doubt. This is the fact of Iḷaṅkō's attending the Vēdic sacrifice elaborately performed by his brother after his return from his northern expedition. A follower of the Jaina cult, with his watchword of *ahimsa*, could not be expected to attend a function like the Vēdic

sacrifice. This, together with his presence on the occasion of the founding of the Pattini cult, conclusively shows the Iḷaṅkō was a follower of the orthodox religion like his brother Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ. We have already seen that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was a follower of orthodox Hinduism. In fact, his very birth was due to special prayers offered to Siva.[3] But his was not the Caivism of the rabid type. He worshipped Vishṇu also. To him there was no differ-

1 See V. Kanakasabhai, *The Tamils 1800 Years Ago*, p. 208.

2 Canto ix, l. 9 ff.

3 Canto xxvi, ll. 98-9.

ence between Siva and Vishṇu. Seṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's religion was what is known in the Sanskrit texts as the *sanātana-dharma.* He was a tolerant Hindu monarch. He was the originator of the cult of the Pattiṉi, to which Iḷaṅkō not only assented, but heartily co-operated in its accomplishment. One cannot make out any difference in his description between one particular sect and another. It is the view of the learned editor Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar that Saivism was the religion of Iḷaṅkō.[1] While agreeing in the main with this view, we may respectfully point out that at the time of which we are speaking, there were no cut and dried sects like Saivism and Vaishṇavism. It would be therefore more appropriate to say that he was a follower of the established faith of the land, which we may call Hinduism in its broader sense.

XVII

COMMENTATORS AND COMMENTARIES:

ARUMPATAVURAIYĀCIRIYAR

It is unfortunate that we have not been able to dis-cover the name and age of the distinguished commentator of the *Cilappatikāram*, well known as Arumpatavuraiyā-ciriyar. Though no clue is forthcoming for the identifica-tion of this commentator, this much is certain that his literary special attainments were of a high order, and that his knowledge of musical treatises was undoubted. This commentary *Arumpatavurai* is the older of the two extant commentaries, the other being that of Aṭiyārk-kunallār. The excellence of the commentary is due to the fact that it explains fully the technical terms and phrases in the text, and interprets them in the light of their actual

1 *Sila.*, preface, p. 17.

use in the Cañkam epoch. Though only words and phrases which require interpretation are pressed into service, the commentary is complete, and throws welcome light on the portion of the text to which the comments of Aṭiyārkkunallār are not available. In this way the com- mentary is useful and also valuable.

That Aṭiyārkkunallār was indebted to this *Arumpata- vurai* is obvious from his own commentary, where in one place[1] he explicitly acknowledges the sources from which he has taken his material. Aṭiyārkkunallār quotes him once by the name Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar. A study of the two extant commentaries shows how Aṭiyārkkunallār has simply followed him in

many places, especially in the cantos which deal with the theory and practice of music. The greatness of the commentary lies in the fact that it furnishes rare and detailed notes on music and dancing. It is no exaggeration at all to say that without them nothing can be made out of the text. For, even with the two commentaries before us, it is difficult to get at the true interpretation of these technical terms relating to the art of music.

Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar's religion was, so far as can be gathered from the commentary, the esta- blished religion of the land, i.e. Hinduism. From the fact that he quotes the extant astrological work *Jinēndramālai* in connexion with *ārūdams*[2] it may be said that he lived after the author of the *Jinēndramālai*. But when the latter flourished is itself doubtful.

XVIII
AṬIYĀRKKUNALLĀR

The other commentator is

Aṭiyārkkunallār, who is supposed to have lived, not without reason, in the fifteenth

1 Canto v, ll. 157-60, commentary.

2 Canto xvii, p. 443.

century A.D. As we have already said, he mentions Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar in one place and he has followed him in the main, sometimes adopting his very phrases and sentences. His is a commentary where due acknowledgement is made of the authorities from which he has taken his material. That he was a critical scholar and a researcher is seen from the portion of his commentary where he interprets the religion of the different characters in the epic, as also from his endeavour to fix the chronological limits of the exact day and time of Kōvalaṉ's starting for Madura, etc. In pressing into service the astronomical data, though not in a way warranted by the original, the commentator shows himself an able astronomer and, we may add, an astrologer too. That he was an accomplished scholar and had made a special study of the musical

treatises is evident from the names of the originals which occur in the commentary. The books quoted from are *Intịrakāḷiyam*, *Pañcamarapu*, *Baratasēṉāpatiyam*, and *Mativāṉar-nāṭakattamiḻnūl*. It appears that these treatises, which were available to the commentator in his time, have been lost in the course of the last five centuries. The commentator is very meticulous about alien words, words in use in the Malaināṭu and the use of extinct pro- verbs. Such terms and expressions are interpreted with the care and the caution which they deserve. He also quotes an author Kaviccakkaravartti.[1] This may be a reference of Cayamkoṇṭāṉ, the author of the *Kaliṅkattu- paraṇi*, or Oṭṭa-Kūttar, the author of a *paraṇi* on Vikrama- cōḻa as testified to us by the commentator on the *Takkayā- kapparaṇi*.

THE COMMENTARY INCOMPLETE

But it is unfortunate that the whole of the commentary is not available.

It is not available in respect of the cantos

1 Canto v, ll. 76-88, commentary.

entitled 'Kāṉalvari', 'Vaḻakkuraikātai', 'Vañciṉamālai', 'Aḻarpaṭukātai' and 'Kaṭṭuraikatai', and the whole of 'Vañcikkāṇṭam'.[1]

Two explanations can be offered. One is that he did not write a commentary on these cantos and the other is that these portions have been lost. The latter theory seems more plausible in view of the internal evidence which can be gathered from the commentary. The following may be adduced.[2]

(1) In his gloss on the term *vari* in 'Araṅkēṟṟukātai', he says more details are furnished in 'Kāṉalvari'.[3]

(2) Again, in the same *katai*, in his gloss on the *yaḻ* (l. 26) he says that an elaborate examination of it is made in 'Kāṉalvari'.[4]

(3) In commenting on lines 27-8 of 'Vēṉirkātai' he remarks that he has spoken of it before under *aṇi* etc. This *aṇi* is in the original text of 'Kāṉalvari', l. 3.

(4) Again, in commenting on lines 106-7 of 'Araṅkēṟṟukātai', the remark is made that it would be examined *in extenso* in 'Aḻaṟpaṭukātai'.[5]

(5) Further, in his comment on lines 45-71 of 'Vēṉirkātai' he refers to the fact that

additional details are given in 'Kaṭṭuraikātai', and a reference may be made to it.[6]

1 Cantos xxiv-xxx.

2 *Sila.*, preface, p. 20.

3 ibid., p. 88.

4 ibid., p. 100.

5 p. 116.

6 p. 237.

It is thus established that Aṭiyārkkunallār certainly wrote his commentary on all the *kātais*, and that the work as a complete one is now lost to us. Though we have no internal evidence to substantiate the theory that he also wrote a commentary on

'Vañcikkāṇṭam', yet in the light of his remarks quoted above, and in view of the fact that some portions of the commentary which according to him were actually written were lost, it is reasonable to assume that the commentator wrote a full commentary which is not traceable now. It may be that one day we shall find it in some private library in an out-of-the-way village.

HIS RELIGION

Though there are no definite data regarding the religion of the commentator, the assumption may be made that he was a Saiva by faith. His leanings towards Jainism can be proved by his interpretation of the common terms as

referring to the Jaina in many a place. To quote one example, he makes the *kōṭṭam* in the Kuṇavāyirkōṭṭam Arukaṉkōil, which has afforded some foundation for the theory that Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ, who made it his residence, must have been a Jain.

VALUE OF COMMENTARIES

In examining the value of these annotations as sources of information of the early history of the ancient Tamil kingdoms, the late P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar was not prepared to attach any importance to them.[1] But this view of the learned author cannot stand. It may be true to some extent that the commentary is coloured by personal views,

but generally the annotator aims at giving the interpreta-

1 *History of the Tamils*, pp. 371-2.

tion handed down by an unbroken tradition, without the help of which no intelligible meaning could be attached to several underlying allusions or references. If this interpretation can be corroborated by an independent source or sources, it compels our acceptance and approval[1].

source

Examining the work in this light, and remembering the paucity of the materials for reconstructing the history of early South India, we must ever be grateful to these annotators, whose authority cannot be questioned inasmuch as their works are quoted by the still more celebrated later annotators. Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar is inclined to the view that Naccinārkkiniyar was one such annotator who quotes Aṭiyārkkunallār.[2] If this is so, it speaks well of the authority, value and standing of our commentator on the epic.

1 See S. K. Aiyangar, *Evolution of Hindu Administrative*

Institutions in South India, p. 14.

2 For example cf, the lines மறை முது முதல்வன் பின்னர்......

பொருப்பன் of 'Vēṭṭuvavari' with ll. 40-2 of *Maturaikkānci*, commentary.

CILAPPATIKARAM

PATIKAM

THE hill-Kuṟavas came in a group before Kuṭakkōc-

Cēral Iḷaṅkō[1] who had renounced his royalty and was
permanently residing in the hermitage of Kuṇavāyil[2] and
said: 'A chaste lady who had lost a breast came to the
shade of the *vēṅkai* tree, rich in its golden flowers; there
the King of the Dēvas appeared, to show her her loving
husband, and took her to Heaven before our very eyes.
This was verily a wonder. Be gracious to know this!'

At that time, the great Tamil poet Cāttaṉ,[3] who was
by his side, exclaimed, 'I know how this happened', and
began to narrate the details. 'In the ancient city of un-
dying fame, Pukār, belonging to the Cōḷa wearing the *ātti*

garland,[4] there was a merchant, named Kōvalan.[5] He lost his great wealth by dalliance with a dancing-girl who was expert in her art. His wife was Kaṇṇaki. With the

1 The younger brother of Seṅkuṭṭuvan.

2 The term in the text is Kuṇavāyirkōṭṭam. Aṭiyārkkunallār describes *kōṭṭam* as a Jaina temple. But this does not seem to be correct. The term *kōṭṭam* (Sans., *kōṣṭha*) means any building sacred to any divinity and not particularly to Arukan, the Jaina deity. Kuṇavāyil (literally, east gate), was the name of the suburb to the east of Vañci.

3 The Caṅkam poet and author of the *Maṇimēkalai*.

4 *Ātti=bauhinia racemosa*. The Tamil kings were distinguished by the garlands they wore. The Cōḻa king had the *ātti*,

the Pāṇṭya and the Cēra kings used the margosa and the palmyra
respectively.

5 Sans., Gōpāla.

intention of selling her tinkling anklet he went with her to the great Pāṇṭyan city of Madura, highly renowned in literature. When he was taking it for sale in the great bazaar he happened to show it to a goldsmith who said that it was fit to be worn only by the queen and not by any one else. Asking Kōvalaṉ to stay there the gold- smith went to, and told, the king that he saw the queen's anklet (which the goldsmith himself had previously stolen) in the hands of the thief. Since that was the moment when Kōvalaṉ's destiny was being fulfilled, the king who wore the garland of margosa blossoms did not inquire into the matter fully, but ordered his tried watchmen to kill the thief

and fetch the anklet. The wife of the murdered Kōvalan̲ having no refuge. shed tears copiously; and because she was so very virtuous, the Pāṇṭya suffered great distress when she plucked out one of her breasts, on which lay a string of pearls, and thereby burnt the great city of Madura. That lady of chastity of high repute is this one (referred to by the Kuṟavas)'.

Hearing this, Iḷaṅkō asked: 'You said that destiny was fulfilled.[1] How was that?'

In reply, Cāttan̲ said, 'Holy man, listen! I lay down at midnight in the Veḷḷiyambalam[2] of the Man̲ṟappotiyil,

1 This is the central theme underlying the whole epic. The story seems to elucidate the fundamental belief of Hinduism and its dissenting sects, like Buddhism and Jainism, that a man's for- tune or misfortune in this birth is the result of his actions, good or bad, in past birth or

births.

2 Veḷḷiyambalam (literally, silver hall) is an open space for the use of the public. Note there are Poṉṉambalam, Maṇiyam- balam, etc., referring to particular shrines. The term Maṉr-appotiyil shows that the village assembly usually met in the temple compound, where it is natural to suppose that large and shady trees were planted and allowed to grow.

sacred to Lord Siva who wears the *koṉṟai* flower on His tuft, In the hoary city of Madura of untainted fame. I saw the tutelary deity of Madura appearing before the heroic Pattiṉi who was in deep distress and saying: "O lady, who raised furious flames from your breast! Now it is that the action of your previous birth has become completed. In your previous birth, the wife of the merchant Caṅkamaṉ of Ciṅkapuram[1] of undying fame laid a curse upon your husband

and yourself. O lady of the beautiful tresses of hair! You will see your husband (again) fourteen days from now, not in his human form, but in the divine." This guileless account did I hear. So we shall write a poem, with songs, illustrating the three truths that *dharma* will become the God of Death to kings who swerve from the path of righteousness, that it is natural for great men to adore a chaste lady of great fame, and that destiny will manifest itself and be fulfilled; and as these truths centre round an anklet of artistic beauty, the poem (*pāṭṭuṭaicceyyuḷ*) can be named *Cilap-patikāram*. As this story relates to all the three crowned monarchs, it is only proper, O venerable saint, that you should write it.'

In response to this request of Cāttaṉ, the saint of extraordinary repute (Iḷaṅkō) composed a poem, consisting of thirty parts, which were the following: The song of benediction; the story about the parents establishing the hero

as a householder; the story of the dancing-girl Mātavi receiving royal recognition for her skill on the stage; the chapter in praise of the twilight; the canto nar- rating the celebration of Indra's festival in the city; the canto describing the sports on the seashore; the section des- cribing the

kāṉalvari and Mātavi's sorrow at the heat caus-

[1] Ciṅkapuram is one of the capitals of ancient Kaliṅka.

ed by the blazing sun; the canto dealing with the sight of the city (Madura) and that of the forest; the canto dealing with the song of the hunters and the sojourn of Kōvalan with his spouse outside the city; the section dealing with the visit to the city; the section describing the

shelter found for the fair lady Kaṇṇaki; the account of the murder of Kōvalaṉ; the canto in which the dance of the cowherdesses is described; that dealing with the distress of the people who heard the news of the burning of the city; the song (*kātai*) dealing with the entry into the city which was in utter turmoil; the canto describing the manner in which Kaṇṇaki presented her case before the king; the vow, the story of the great conflagration, the facts revealed by the tutelary deity of Madura to Kaṇṇaki; the dance of the hill-damsels wearing fragrant flowers; the story of the seeing, taking and bathing of the slab of stone in the holy Ganges, and the planting of the image; the story of the praise offered to, and the boon obtained from, the Goddess of Chastity.

These stories which are narrated in poetic form (*uraiyiṭaiyiṭṭa pāṭṭuṭaicceyyuḷ*) by Iḷaṅkō-Aṭigaḷ were heard by Kūlavāṇikaṉ[1] Cāttaṉ of Madura. This is the

account of the origin of the poem which elaborates the *trivarga* (*pālvakai*).[2]

1 This indicates that Cāttaṉ belonged to the community of corn-chandl ers. The term *vāṇiya is* from the Sanskrit *vaṇik* a merchant. Though a common name etymologically for all merc- hants, it is used in practice only in connexion with oil-pressers. Amongst the other *vāṇiyas* there were *ilaivaṇiyas* or betelsellers and numerous other branches. *Kūlavāṇiyas* are said to have dealt in grain.

2 The *trivarga* are *dharma* (Tam., *aṟam*), *artha* (Tam., *poruḷ*) and *kāma* (Tam., *iṉbam*). The expression shows the naturalization of the idea of *puruṣārthas* in the Tamil land.

URAIPERUKATTURAI[1]

1. From that day forth the Pāṇṭyaṉ kingdom was deprived of rains, and famine-stricken. This was followed by fever and plague. Veṟṟivēṟceḻiyaṉ[2] reigning at Koṟkai[3]

propitiated the Lady of Chastity by sacrificing a thousand goldsmiths, and celebrated a festival when there was a downpour eausing fertility to the land. Thereupon the kingdom was rid of disease and distress.

2. Hearing this, the Iḷam-Kōcar[4] of the Koṅkunāṭu[5] instituted festivities in honour of the Lady of Chastity in their land, and this resulted in plentiful rains.

3. On hearing this, Gajabāhu[6] of Ceylon encircled by the sea, built a shrine for the Lady of Chastity where daily sacrifices were performed. Thinking that she would

1 This was added to *patikam* by an early editor whose
identity is not known.

2 The successor of Neṭuñceḷiyan̲.

3 Quondam capital of the Pāṇṭyan̲ kingdom. It was the same as Kavāṭapuram (seaport capital) referred to in the
Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra and the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

4 The smaller chieftains of Tamiḻnāṭu. Their services were

requisitioned by great kings like the Pāṇṭyaṉ. (See *Maturaik-kāñci,* ll 773-4.)

5 This is to be identified as the western part of the Koṅku region: Tuḷunāṭu, Coorg and parts of Mysore. This may be called Kōcarnāṭu.

6 The Cēra King Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's contemporary in Ceylon.

remove the distress (of his land), he also instituted annual festivals commencing with the month of Āṭi; then the rains came to stay, and increased the fertility of the land so as to produce unfailing crops.

4. At this the Cōḷa king Perumkiḷḷi[1] built at Uraiyūr a shrine for Pattiṉikkaṭavuḷ, and instituted daily offerings, thinking that she would

shower her blessings at all times.

1 **The contemporary Cola king.**

NURCIRAPPUPPAYIRAM

Veṇpā

THE unexcelled language of the *opus* of the ascetic Cēraṉ, the prince of Kuṭanāṭu, highly spoken of by the people of Kūṭal (Madura), resembles a range of hills with its group of peaks as seen in a mirror.[1]

Kaṭṭaḷaikkalitturai

The crown-jewel of the great Cēra composed the *Cilappatikāram*, much appreciated

by the people of Pūm- pukār, which was the residence of wealthy merchants who formed one of the four famous castes created by the four-faced Lord (Brahmā), and which was the dwelling-place of authorities on Tamil literature.

1 This and the following stanza appear *to* be ancient com— positions, but it is not

possible to trace their authorship.

I. PUKARKKANTAM

CANTO I

MANKALAVALTTUPPATAL

OR

THE SONG OF BENEDICTION

Praised be the Moon![1] Praised be the

Moon, for, like
the cool white umbrella of the king who wears the pollen-
spreading garland, He blesses our beautiful world.

Praised be the Sun! Praised be the Sun, for, like the
commands of the Lord of the Kāvērināṭu, He revolves
round the golden-peaked Mēru.

Praised be the mighty Clouds! Praised be the mighty
Clouds, for, like him whose land the frightful sea surrounds,
they stand on high, and pour their gifts to men below.

Praised be sweet Pukār![8] Praised be sweet Pukār,
for it is as famous as the glory of the (Cōḻa) royal line all
over the wide world,

encircled by the waters of the sea.

1 For a similar invocation of the deities see *Takkayā-kapparani*, 'Kaṭavul', st. 9, comm. It may be noted that the first deity invoked is the Moon, thus bearing testimony to the prevalence of the moon cult in ancient Tamil India.

2 Pukār, Kākandi, Kāvirippūmpaṭṭiṉam, and Paṭṭiṉam, are other names for Kāvērippaṭṭiṉam, the ancient capital city of the Cōḻas on the seashore. According to some, it is the *Khaberis Emporium* mentioned by Ptolemy in the first century A.D. The inscriptions secured from the modern Kāvērippaṭṭiṉam and its vicinity leave no doubt as to its identity with Kāvirippūmpaṭṭiṉam alias Pukār. (*An. Rep. Ep.*, 1919, p. 92.)

Those who have fully heard and known all that is to be

heard and known,[1] hold the view that, like the Potiyil hill[2]

and the Himalayan range, the unique city of Pukār,

renowned for its generations of unexcelled ancient families,

stands immutable as the great ones who live there.

In that city of Pukār which equalled Heaven in its fame

and the Serpent World[3] in its enjoyments, there lived a

celebrated sea-captain (*mānāikaṉ*),[4] liberal in his gifts like

the rain-bearing clouds. He had a daughter, Kaṇṇaki,[5]

1 The term *kēḷvi* in l. 19 may also be interpreted as the

Sruti or the Vēdic lore. It occurs in the sense of the Vēdas in

Patiṟṟ., third Ten, st. 1, l. 1.

2 The Potiyil hill

is noted as the residence of the sage Agastya (*Bhāga. Pur.*, Bk. X, ch. 79, st. 16-17). This hill of the Pāṇṭyas can be identified with the Malaya, otherwise knows as Chandanādri or Candanācala. Perhaps the epithet Malayadhvaja attributed to the Pāṇṭyan king in the *Mhb.*, Bk. III, ch. 281, st. 44f (ch. *Raghu*, canto iv, st. 46-9) is after the hill Malaya. The Tamil name Potikai is the original of the Bettigo of Ptolemy (J. W. MacCrindle, *Ptolemy* 1885, p. 78).

3 Nākanāṭu; also Pavaṇam. According to the Jaina scriptures the joys in the Nākalōka are greater than those in heaven or Svargalōka: cf. *Mhb.*, 'Ādi', ch. 234.

4 The terms *mānāikan* (Sans., *mahānāyaka*=great leader) and *mācāttuvān* (Sans., *mahāśārtha*) connote respectively 'members of maritime commercial ventures' and 'members of caravan trade': see canto ii, ll. 7-8; also *Studies in*

Tamil Literature and History p. 77, n. 2.

5 It is to be noted here that the heroine of the story has been mentioned first and then the hero. This is because the story from start to finish centres round the heroine. Or it may point to a custom in ancient India of speaking first of the wife and then of the husband in referring to a married couple (*vadhūvara*), e.g. Sitārāma, Pārvati Paramēśvara.

who was like a golden creeper and was[1] nearing twelve years old. She had high qualities on account of which women adored and praised her, exclaiming, 'She is Lakṣhmi[2] of praiseworthy form, seated on the lotus, and her excellence is that of the faultless

northern star (Arun- tati.'[3]

In that selfsame city lived an inland merchant prince (*mācāttuvāṉ*) of abounding wealth, who, along with his relations, was placed in the foremost rank of the aristocracy by the monarch of that great kingdom. He was, in sooth, the lord of a rich treasure[4] and gave away his earnings to others in need. He had a son, named Kōvalaṉ,[5] nearing sixteen years. Kōvalaṉ's expanding fame made the earth

1 The term *akavaiyāḷ* means that she was not years old.

yet twelve

2

Consort of Viṣhṇu and Goddess of Wealth.

3 Aruntati is the wife of the sage Vasiṣṭha, one of the seven celebrated sages who went by the name of Saptaṛiṣis. She was distinguished for her chastity.

Chaste women are generally compared to Aruntati (see *Patirr.*, fourth Ten. st. 1, l. 28). The *Bōdhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* rules that a married couple should see the star Aruntati and the

Pole Star on the first day of their marriage (*Govt. Oriental Series*, Mysore, 1904, p. 124). Legend has it that each of the seven primeval sages had his own wife. Of these the wives of six

sages excluding that of Vasiṣṭha fell in love with Agni and gave their breast-milk to Subrahmaṇya, These six became Kṛittika Nakṣhatras which are six in number (the Pleiades ; but Aruntati stood firm in her chastity and attained an honourable place as an auspicious star fit to be seen by chaste and pure women so that they might ever lead holy lives. (*Mhb*., 'Vana Parva', ch. 226-30. Also S. Sorenson's *Index*, p. 91).

4 It may be interpreted as twofold treasure and the comparison may be to Kubēra, the Lord of Divine Treasure, Saṇkha and Padma.

5 Note here also the term *akavaiyāṉ*.

all to small to bear it. Moon-faced maidens, skilled in song and sweet in voice, fondly said to each other, 'O, He is Subrahmaṇiya ncarnate !'[1] and revealed their exces- sive love for him

when they spoke in praise of him in their own gatherings.

Them, (Kaṇṇaki and Kōvalaṉ), their worthy parents longed to see, on a happy day, as a bridal pair. Happy in such thoughts, they sent forth fair maidens, seated on an elephant's neck, to invite to the wedding all those who lived in that great city.

As they went forth into the streets, drums were beaten: *mirudangams* were sounded: conches were blown: and white umbrellas were lifted high as if in kingly procession. O, how enchanting was their entry into the pavilion, glim- mering with pearls beneath the canopy of blue silk and with dazzling pillars, decked with diamonds and beautified by overhanging garlands! That was the day on which the Moon moving in the sky approached the star Rōkiṇi;[2]

1 He is the War-God in whose honour Kāḷidāsa wrote his classic *Kumārasambhava.* He is

a very popular deity in Tamil India (see T. A Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, p. 415), According to *Tolk.*, he is the tutelary deity of the hillmen (*kuṟiñcini am*) (*Akam.*, *sūtra* 5). Among the Caṅkam works the *Tirumurukāṟṟuppāṭai* and one-fourth of the *Paripāṭal*

are sung in glorification of Kumāra. Incidentaily it may be noticed that the arguments in favour of a later date for the *Paripāṭal* (seventh century A.D.), on the basis of astronomical data, put forward by the late Swamikannu Pillai (see *Indian Ephemeris*, Vol. I, Pt. II, Appendix III; 'The Chronology of Early Tamil Literature', and further examined by K. G. Sankara in *J.R.A.S.*, 1932, pp. 541-5), are not tenable in the light of other and more positive data.

2 Cf *Akam.*, st. 136. That Rōkiṇī is an auspicious planet is attested to by Vēdic authority (*Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 415), not to s

peak of the later *Bṛhat-Jātaka* and

similar literature. Rōkiṇī,

when Kōvalaṉ who walked around the holy fire,[1] in accordance with scriptural injunctions as directed by the revered priest, approached his bride, divinely fair, resembling the star Aruntati. How fortunate were those who enjoyed such a splendid sight! Lovely maidens, bringing spices and flowers, spake and sang, and looked bewitch- ing. Women with full breasts and glowing tresses took with them sandal-paste, frankincense, perfumes and powders. Ladies with lovely teeth bore lamps, vessels, and *pālikai* pots[2] of tender shoots. These maidens, who looked like golden creepers and whose hair was decked with flowers, showered blossoms on the bridal pair, saying: 'May you live a flawless life, with a love that knows no separation, and held in close and unrelaxing embrace!' They then led Kaṇṇaki, the Aruntati of this vast world, to the auspicious nuptial bed with the prayer that the royal tiger-emblem, engraved on this side of the Himalayas, might remain for ever on the

moreover, was the favourite of the twenty-seven wives of the Moon.

1. The fire-rite was already in vogue in the Tamil land for purposes of marriage. It seems to have been a regular institution ever since the age of *Talk*. Aruntati (Sans., Arundhati) is the star Alcor in the Great Bear. She was the daughter of Kaśyapa, sister of Nārada, and wife of Vasiṣṭha. As the model of conjugal felicity she figures in the Sāstraic literature. The reference in- dicates the adoption by the Tamil Vaiśyas of the Aryan marital custom and procedure. It is worth noting that Kaṇṇaki was barely twelve at the time of her marriage.

2 *Pālikai* pots are the chief feature of marriage and other *samskāras* among the Hindus even today. The *Bōdhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* mentions five *pālikais* for purposes of marriage. The technical term *ankurārpaṇa* (p. 328 of the Mysore edition), pro- bably suggests that the married couple should be

good and healthy progeny.

C—8

blessed with

golden crest of that mountain,[1] and that the Cōḷa king (Cempiaṉ)[2] who possessed the fierce javelin in battle, might throw his matchless discus[3] all over the world.

•

1 The reference here is to Karikāla's engraving the tiger crest on the Himalayas. For a learned study on the life and achievements of Karikāla see Ulakanātham Pillai, *Karikālaccōḷar*, in Tamil. If we compare these lines with canto v, ll. 90-104, there is the implication that Karikāla was not satisfied with being the overlord of all India and his ambition was to cross the snow-clad hills and to extend his conquests to Tibet, China, etc. (Note the terms *ippāl* and *uppāl.*) But the Himalayas were a stumbling block; he could not proceed further and had to return. Pandit M.

Raghava Aiyangar is of opinion that the Cōḷa king's route lay through the passes between Sikkim and Bhutan, leading to the Chambi Valley in Tibet. This is attested to by the fact that even today one of the passes there, and the mountain range as well, go by the name of the Cōḷa Pass and the Cōḷa Range. (*Imperial Gazetteer of India*, 'Sikkim', Vol. X, p. 327, Vol. XXII, p. 365. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. V, p. 667, s. v. Sikkim, Vol. XX, p. 640.) *Kalaimakal* (Madras), Vol. I, p. 56 ff.

2

Cempiyaṉ is an epithet for the Cōḷa king. The tradition transmitted in Tamil literature bears evidence to the fact that one of the great ancestors of the Cōḷas was Cipicakravarti, and as coming from his family, the Cōḷas claimed the title Cempiyaṉ. If this tradition has any value at all, it demonstrates that the Cōḷa dynasty is only a branch of a North Indian dynasty of which Cipi was an honoured member. But there are scholars who look upon this dynasty as indigenous to South India.

3

An emblem of universal sovereignty.

CANTO II

MANAIYARAMPATUTTA KATAI

OR

SETTING UP HOME

THE untold wealth of the seafaring merchants of the rich city (Pukār) made even far-famed monarchs covet it. The varieties of foreign merchandise, rare commodities brought to the city by ships and caravans, were so vast that, even if the whole world, encircled by the roaring seas, flocked into it, its wealth would not become diminished.

In the delights which it yielded, and in the presence of noble persons, (the parents of) Kaṉṉaki the lotus-eyed and her loving husband Kōvalaṉ, who were nobly born and blessed with inexhaustible ancestral wealth, the city resembled Uttarakuru,[1] the residence of

great penance performers.

In the middle story of their lofty mansion, they (Kōvalan and Kannaki) seated themselves on a gem-legged couch which looked as if it had been made for them by Maya.[2] As they were enjoying themselves, the

1 The Uttarakuru (*Vedic Index*, p. 84) is perhaps the semi-mythical region of enjoyment and bliss. Six such places are distinguished also in the Jaina literature. See *Divākaram*, st. 12

For a similar description of the Uttarakuru, see *Mhb*., 'Sabhā Parva', ch. 29, st. 66-71. The *Aitarēya Brāhamaṇa* locates it as a trans-Himalayan country (ch. 8, st. 14). According to Pliny, Bk. VI, c. 17, Amometus wrote a book on the Attacorae (Uttarakuru). See J. W. MacCrindle, *Megasthenes and Arrianā* 1926, pp. 76-9.

2 Though Aṭiyārkkunallār interprets the term Mayan as the Carpenter of the Gods, Sanskrit tradition has it that Viśvakarma

soft south wind entered, at the proper time with the bees, through the lattice windows ornamented with a series of jewelled hangings, bringing the sweet fragrance of the cool *āmpal*, the close-petalled *kuvaḷai*, the half-opened lotus filled with humming drones, and several other flowers which blossomed in fields and on the surface of small pools, to wit, the pleasing *tāḻai* and the white wide-mouthed *kōtai*, and blew over them. Along with it came the drones which had partaken of the tiny particles of *mātavi* from the arbour of the *campaka*, and which were in eager search for the sweet-smelling tresses of the charming damsel with her beaming face.

(Bathed in such a breeze), the couple passed out into the open terrace where, under the cool rays of the moon, the God of Love sat holding his arrow of flowers. There they laid themselves down in a bed covered with pollen attracting humming bees. Kōvalaṉ amused himself by painting, on the

broad shoulders of his lady-love, the sugar-cane[1] and the *vaḷḷi*[2], when they looked like the sun and the moon shedding their lustre upon the whole sea-girt world. He wore a garland of jasmine whose sparkling white petals had been opened by the honey-seeking bee. Hers was a garland of the charming close-petalled *kaluṉīr*. With their wreaths intertwined owing to their close embrace, both of unsatiated love grew wearied when Kōvalaṉ looked into the beaming face of Kaṇṇaki, and spoke to her in words of prattling endearment

: was the architect of the Gods, and Maya was the architect of the Asuras.

1 The bow of the God of Love is said to be of sugar-cane.

2 *Vaḷḷi* is evidently the heavenly creeper known as *kāmavalli* Cf. *Jīvakacintāmaṇi*, st. 365, where the *kāmavalli* is compared to a lovely lady.

101

'My dear, though Civā has adorned his tuft of hair by placing the beautiful crescent moon[1] in it so that the gods may praise him. He will yet give it away to you so as to make it your forehead: for, was not the moon born along with you?[2]

'Likewise the bodyless God of Love will be happy to

give you his big sugar-cane bow, so that it may become

your dark eyebrows; for, is it not a law of warfare that

the vanquished foe should yield up his weapons?

'Indra too is bound to give you his thunderbolt[3] which

protects the Dēvas, saying that it will fittingly become

your waist, for, were you not born long before ambrosia?

'Though the six-faced one (Subrahmaṇya) has no cause

for doing it, still He has given you his long lance, red as

fire, so as to form your two dark, cloudlike, red-cornered

eyes; he naturally wishes to see me in distress!

1 This is apparently a reference to the *aṣṭamicandra*, i. e. the crescent of the eighth lunar day, which is generally compared to the forehead of beautiful ladies. Among the Sahasranāma of the Dēvī, one is *aṣṭamīcandrabibhrāja dalikasthalaśōbhitā*.

2 The reference is to the legend of the churning of the ocean by the Dēvas and the Asuras for nectar which the former drank and became immortal With the nectar came also the Moon and the Goddess of Wealth. To Kōvalaṉ, Kaṇṇaki is none else than this Lakṣhmi. See *Mhb*. 'Adi', ch. 17-19 for a fuller description; also S. Sorenson's *Index*, pp. 34-5.

3 Like nectar, Indra's Vajra or thunderbolt is said to have sprung from out of the churning ocean. It is a two-headed trident with a slender handle in the middle, which is compared here to the lady's waist. According to the Sanskrit tradition, it was the bone of the sage Dadhici that was transformed into the Vajra, the war-implement of Indra. (See *Mhb.*, 'Vanaparva', ch. 99; Salyaparva', ch. 52.)

'By your complexion you have put to shame the gem-
tinted peacock with its beautiful black plumes, which hides
itself in the woods. O lady of the shining face! By your
soft and lovely gait you have put to shame the swan which
hides itself amidst the lotuses of the cool tank. The little
green parrots are ashamed of themselves when they listen

to your charming voice which assumes the character of
the flute, *vīṇā*, and ambrosia: yet, O lady of stately
gait, they love to stay for ever on your flower-like hands.

'O lady with charming tresses fragrant with flowers!
Of what use to you are dressing maids and ornaments
other than your flawless *tāli*?[1] Again, beyond a few
flowers to be worn on your black hair, what need is there
for any splendid wreath of flowers? Nor does your hair
require any paste of *kastūri*. Common frankincense is
quite sufficient. Likewise with the sandal-paste figures
painted on your beautiful breasts, there is no need for a

string of pearls. What folly induced them to deck you
with so many ornaments causing drops of perspiration on
your face, and pain to your slender waist!

O purest gold! O conch-white pearl!
O faultless fragrance! O sugar-cane, honey!
Unattainable beauty, life-giving nectar!

O noble child of nobly-born merchants!

1 The commentators seem to interpret the term *maṅkalavaṇi* as natural beauty, and this may fit in with the context. The other interpretation of *maṅkalavaṇi* is *tāli* or *tirumāṅkalyam*, the wearing of which on the occasion of a marriage seems to have been originally a South Indian custom, later adopted by the followers of the Brahmanical religion. Cf. canto iv. 1. 50. See, for instance, the chapter in the *Rāmāyaṇa* describing

the marriage of Rāma and Sītā (Bk. I, ch. 73), where there is no mention of *māṅkalya-sūtram*. The term *sūtram* in the sense of *tāli* occurs in the later *Śmṛtis*.

Shall I say that you are an unborn gem of the
hills?
Shall I say that you are nectar not produced
from the sea?
Shall I say that you are melody not born of the
yāḻ?
O my girl of dark and flowing hair !'
Uttering ceaselessly such well-worded

speeches, the

ecstatic lover with bright garlands, spent with his fair lady-

love days and days in deep enjoyment.

One such day, the venerable lady (mother of Kōvalan)

established the lady of abundant and flowing tresses

(Kaṇṇaki) in a house of her own, where she provided her

with faithful servants and wealth of all kinds, so as to

serve[1] her near and dear ones, ascetics and guests, in a

manner appropriate to the householder's life, that thereby

her fame might increase.

Some years passed, and Kaṇṇaki in the discharge of

her household duties earned a name worthy to be praised.

VEṆPĀ

They (Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki), who (respectively) resembled Kāma (God of Love) and Rati (Goddess of Love), enjoyed close embraces like smoke-coloured serpents; they enjoyed all sorts of pleasures as if realizing the instability of life on the earth.[2]

1 The chief duties of the lady of a house were the giving of gifts to the deserving, the serving of Brahmans, and the entertaining of ascetics and guests, as evidenced by Kaṇṇaki's own words in canto xvi, ll. 71-3. This is also the prescription of the Dharmaśāstras or law-codes like that of Maṉu. A student of Tiruvaḷḷuvar's *Tirukkuṟaḷ* will find elaborate prescriptions for the above-mentioned duties of the householder.

2 The poet here hints at the coming tragedy.

CANTO III

ARANKERRUKATHI

OR

THE DEBUT

THE great sage (Agastya) of the divine Potiyil hill

(once) cursed Indra's son[1] (along with Ūrvacī)[2], and the

latter obtained redemption by displaying her skill on the

stage.[3] From that distinguished line of celestial nymphs,

was descended Mātavi, noted for her deeds of great

distinction, as well as for her broad shoulders and

beautiful tresses which scattered the pollen of flowers.

In dance and song, and in grace of form,[4] she underwent

training for seven years, succeeding in all three;

and at the age of twelve

she was in a position to display

1 Jayanta, the son of Indra, was cursed, together with Ūrvaci, by the sage Agastya for misbehaviour. Jayanta was reborn as a bamboo in the Vindhya Hills and Ūrvaci as a dancing-girl on the earth. According to the *Suddhānandappirakāśa*, a late musical treatise, Ūrvaci was born first in the city of Kāñci.

2 Ūrvaci (Tam., Uruppaśi) is a daughter of the Gods (an *apsaras*). For the origin and career of Ūrvaci see *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 24, st. 25 ff. Cf. Dikshitar, *Matsya Purāṇa—a study*, 1935, pp. 42-3.

3 The term used is *talaikkōl*. It might be a staff used by the dancer to serve as an equipoise. For details see ll. 114 ff.

4 The chief requisites are dancing, singing and natural beauty (*aḷaku*). If *aḷaku* is interpreted as

an art, it may mean
'proper rhythm'. The period of training was seven years commencing from the age of five.

her talents before the reigning king[1] who wore heroic anklets.

Her dancing master knew the characteristics of the
two schools of the dancing art.[2] He could effectively
combine the different dancing poses with the *vilakku*
song.[3] He had a clear knowledge of the established rules
of the eleven modes of body-movement and limb-move-

ment (*āṭal*), of the songs (*pāṭṭu*),[4] of the resounding instruments (*koṭṭu*), as also of the dance (*āṭal*), of gestures (*pāṭal*),[5] of the measured beats (*pāṇi*),[6] and of time-beats (*tūkku*).[7]

1 According to the commentator the king under reference is Karikāla. But a study of the chronology of the early centuries of the Christian era shows that the king referred to must have been a successor to Karikāla. This has been examined in the Introduction.

2 The two schools are the *dēśi* (secular) and *mārga* (orthodox), which are the two kinds of *kūttu*. There were a number of *kūttus* which came under one category or the other. Like *kūttu*, music was also classified as *dēsi* and *mārga*. (See Introduction by M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar to his edition of the *Svaramēḷakalānidhi*, Annamalai University, 1932).

3 Of the fourteen limbs of *vilakku* three are distinguished, *vēntuvilakku, paṭaivilakku* and *ūrvilakku*. For details see Aṭiyārk-kunallār's commentary, *Sila.*, p. 82.

4 The expression *pāttu* here is a reference to the *Akam*, and *Puṟam, nāṭakam*, or dramatic compositions.

5 The gestures of *pāṭal* are said to be of eight kinds.

6 This was either with the hands or a metal disk. Was the Tamil technical expression *paṇ* derived from it? The earliest texts of the *Tēvāram* and *Nālāyiraprapantam* classify the psalms according to *paṇs*.

7 This *tūkku* is said to be of seven kinds. The reverberations are created by the manipulation of time-beats. Probably *pāṇi* and *tūkku* composed a full *tālam*.

During the course of the exhibition of the dancing art, composed of the foregoing elements, he knew when only one hand had to be used for gesticulation (*piṇṭi*),[1] and when both the hands had to be used (*piṇaiyal*). He also knew when the hands had to be used for exhibiting action alone (*toḻiṟkai*), and when for graceful effect alone (*eḻiṟkai*). Knowing as he did the conventions at the time of dancing, he avoided the mixing up of the single-hand demonstration (*kūṭai*) with the double-hand demonstration (*vāram*) and vice versa, as also the mixing up of pure gesture with gesticulatory movement and vice versa. In the movements of the feet also, he did not mix up the *kuravai* with the *vari*.[2] He was such an expert.

Her music teacher was likewise skilled in handling the *yāḻ*[3] and the *kuḻal* (flute),[4] in the technique of the *tāḷam*

1 The *piṇṭi* consisted of twenty-four exhibitions and the *piṇaiyal* of thirteen.

2 These are the *kuravaikkūttu* and the *varikkūttu*.

3 Four varieties of *yāḻ* are distinguished: *pēriyāḻ*, *makarayāḻ*, *śakōṭayāḻ*, and *śeṅkōṭṭiyāḻ* of 21, 19, 14 and 7 strings respectively. (See also *Puṟam*., st. 152, comment) It may be pointed out that Sārngadēva's *vīṇā* was of 22 strings, and that it was simplified by Rāmāmātya (16th cent.) into one of seven strings, and by his critic and successor Vēnkaṭamakhi (17th cent.) into one of five strings. We cannot say positively what was the type prevalent in the Tamil country. The *yaḻ* was apparently the *vīṇa*, known as such because of the figure of the conventional lion

into which the shaft was worked at the end. The terms *makarayal* etc., give a clue to it. The lute is an instrument going back to Vēdic times.

4 The *kuḻal* was made of one of five materials, namely, bamboo, sandal, bronze, red catechu, or coromandel ebony. Of these, bamboo was regarded as the best material, bronze middling, and others as distinctly inferior. The flute was as ancient an instrument as the lute and the drum.

(timing), in the manipulation of the vocal chords, and in the production of the soft low note of the *mirutaṅkam*.[1] He could make all these sounds harmonize agreeably to the dance (*āṭal*). Knowing what music was appropriate to the *vari* and *āṭal*, he had the discriminating knowledge

of all the subtle sounds of the flawless *dēsikam* music. Because of his perfect knowledge he could elaborate upon and classify all varieties of dances and music, and still remain true to the spirit of their composers.

There was, again, the learned composer of songs whose knowledge of the Tamil language was complete and known to the whole Tamil land surrounded by the noisy sea.[2] An authority in the art of dramaturgy he had a knowledge of the two branches, *vēttiyal*[3] and *potuviyal*[4], and exhibited it in his compositions. Realizing the improper expressions employed by others (his rivals), he scrupulously avoided such defects in his own dramatic poetry.[5]

1 This is one of the thirty-one skin instruments of music.

2 Surrounded by sea on three sides and extending up to Vēṇkaṭam (modern Tirupati Hills) in the north and the Kumari in the south was the ancient Tamil land. Here three branches of Tamil literature were current.

3 The branch relating to *Akam.* in the dramatic com- position.

4 The branch relating to *Puram,* in dramatic works.

5 The technical term Tamil is of three kinds, *iyal, icai* and *natakam.* See V. G. Suryanarayana Sastri, *History of the Tamil Language*, 1930, and Pandit V. Swaminatha Aiyar's *Sankattamilum Pirkalattamilum*, 1929, pp. 45-52. *Iyal* refers to literary Tamil; *icai* is that division of Tamil literature which consists of verses set to music as distinct from poetry or drama. *Natakam* is dramatic literature. These three divisions constitute the *muttamil.*

He who played upon the *mirutankam*, knew all forms of dancing and singing, the

musical notes, the pure Tamil modes of speech, the melody and the *tāḷam*, the harmony born of differentiated time-beats, as well as the flaws that might result from such manipulations, together with the use of different kinds of expressions (*dēsikam*). In playing upon his instruments, he knew how to combine correctly single beats, how to give time for double beats so as to be heard well, how to make both these kinds of beats melodiously merge with the notes of the lute and the flute, and also with the evenly drawn-out note of the vocal chords. With dexterity he could, wherever necessary, subdue the sound of his instrument, so that the other instruments might be properly heard; at times, he would also fitly drown them with the overpowering sound of his *mirutaṅ- kam.* (Such was the high degree of perfection which this master had reached).

The flutist was a master of the traditional rules of that

art. He knew the two combinations known as *cittira*[1] and *vañjaṉai*,[2] whereby harsh syllables were softened and rendered sweet to the ear. He knew the four *varttaṉas* (involving fingering skill), and with his knowledge of the science of the *pālai* music (*kural* and *iḷi*)[3], he adjusted himself to the sound produced by the *muḻavu*. He could play carefully enough to be in tune with the *mirutaṅkam* and the *iḷi* strains of the flute. He could observe the notes voiced by the singer and elaborate upon what he heard and at the same time keep himself within the limits of the tune.

1 The term *cittira-p-puṇarppu* is nasalizing the hard consonants in singing a musical piece (*Tamil Lexicon*, p. 141).

2 The term *vañjaṉai-p-puṉarppu* is nasalizing the soft con- sonants in singing.

3

Also *Paṭṭaṭai* as in *vaṇṇap-paṭṭaṭai* of the line 63,

He exhibited his grasp of melodies[1] by playing note by note so that each separate sound might faultlessly be heard.

Then there was the master of the lute of the fourteen strings. In order to produce the seven *pālai* notes he would conjointly sound the respective strings in the lute, known as the *tāram*, and the *kural*, and bringing them to the central part of the lute he would tune

the *kaikkiḷai* part of the instrument. Similarly, touching the other stout string on the *tāram* side and the other two slender strings on the *kural* side and bringing them to the central part of the lute, he would tune the *viḷari* part of the instrument.

Then proceeding from *uḻai*, the most slender string, up to the *kaikkiḷai*, he would play upon all the fourteen strings and thus produce the *cempālai* note. In a definite order the notes would arise, e.g. *paṭumalaippālai* from *kaikkiḷai*, *sevvaḻippālai* from *tuttam*, *kōṭippālai* from *tāram*, *viḷarip-pālai* from *viḷari*, *mēṟcempālai* from *iḷi*—thus are the

combinations effected. In the lute, the notes become lower and lower as they pass over to the left (side of the instrument). It is just the opposite in the flute. The expert in the lute can mix the low and high and the middling notes with a pleasing effect.

The site for erecting the stage was also chosen in accordance with well-established traditions,[2] having regard to the nature of the soil. For purposes of the measure-

1 The technical terms are *vārappāṭal* and *kūṭaippāṭal*.

2 The reference to *nūl* in ll. 95-6 shows the authority of the

śilpaśastra which was then in vogue. According to *Arumpatavurai* the reference is to dramatic works. This is not very convincing. The choice of the site and the fixing of the stage must follow the prescriptions of the *śilpaśastra* only.

ment of the stage,[1] the *kōl*, which was a piece of bamboo growing in the sacred high hills, with the length of a span between every two of its joints, and with twenty-four thumb breadths, was the standard. The stage was eight *kōls* in length, seven *kōls* in breadth, and one *kōl* in height. It had two appropriate doors. The plank platform placed over it was four *kōls* in width. Over the stage were placed painted pictures (of the *bhūtam*)[2] for praise and worship. The graceful lamp illumining the stage was so placed that the pillars did not cast shadows.[3] The single screen and the screen[4] between the two pillars to the right of the stage, besides the overhanging curtain, were well manipulated by ropes. (Added to these) was the canopy painted[5] with many beautiful pictures, from which were hanging loosely, garlands of pearl and others. Such was the novel and attractive appearance which the stage presented.

1. For a description of the stage see *Suddhānandappirakaśa* quoted by Pandit Swaminatha Aiyar, *Sila.*, pp. 114-5, n. The two doors were intended one for entrance and the other for exit.

2 This statement shows that

the institution of *varṇāśrama*

had already come to stay in the Tamil land. The names of the deities or *būtas* worshipped are Vacciraṭēkaṉ, Vacciraṭantaṉ, Varuṇaṉ and Iraṭṭakēcvaraṉ (*Cila.*, p. 115, n. Cf. *Civakacintamani*, st. 672). Further details as to the clothing, food, etc., of these four *būtas* are seen in 'Alarpaṭukātai', ll. 2. ff. and ll. 110 ff.

3 This shows a highly advanced state of engineering skill.

4 In the *Cīvakacintamaṇi* these three kinds of screens (*eḻiṉi*) are mentioned (st. 675, comm.). See also *Maṇi*, canto v, l. 3. *Eḻiṉi* is evidently the same as *yavanika*.

5 Portrait painting was not unknown in the early centuries of the Christian era. Cf. *Maṇi.*, canto xviii, l. 46.

The *talaikkōl*, or the staff,[1] was the central shaft of a splendid white umbrella captured in the battle-field from monarchs of great repute. It was covered over by purest *jāmbūnada* gold,[2] its joints bedecked with

nine gems. This staff represented Jayanta, Indra's son, and as such was worshipped in the palace of the protecting king of the white umbrella (the Cōḻa),

On the day[3] on which this staff was to be used by the dancing-girl, she had to bathe it with holy waters, brought in a golden pitcher, and afterwards to garland it. Then it was handed over with a blessing to the State elephant already adorned with a plate of gold and other ornaments on its forehead. To the accompaniment of the drum pro- claiming victory, and other musical instruments, the king and his five groups of advisers[4] were to circumambulate the chariot and the elephant and give the *talaikkōl* to the musician-poet on the top of the chariot. Then they went round the town in a procession, and entering the theatre they placed the *talaikkōl* in its appointed position.

1

ll. 1:4-5 are repeated in a slightly altered from in canto xxviii, ll. 98-9 of this work.

2 Four varieties of gold are distinguished, of which the *jambūnada* is the purest variety.

3 Aṭiyārkkunallār, acting on the authority of Mativāṇaṉār, speaks of the following as the auspicious days: *Pūraṭam*, *Kartikai*, *Pūśam*, *Baraṇi*, *Rēvati*, *Tiruvatirai*, *Aviṭṭam*, *Cittirai*, *Viśakam*, and *Makam*. The *raśis* appropriate to these are *Riṣabha*, *Simha*, *Tulam*, *Kaṭakam*, *Vṛccikam*, and *Mituuam*. It must be noted that there is no warrant in the text for such astronomical data.

4 The term *aimperumkuḻu* has been interpreted in different ways. See S. K. Aiyangar, *Hindu Administrative Institutions in South India*, 1931, p. 18; K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Pāṇṭyan Kingdom*, pp. 32-3; also Dikshitar, *Hindu Administrative* Institu- tions, pp. 161-2; Studies in Tamil Literature and History, p. 204.

After this the instument-players occupied their allotted seats.[1] The dancing-girl (Mātavi) placed her right foot[2] forward, and stepping in, stayed by the side of the pillar on the right, according to the ancient custom. Likewise her older assistants who followed the old custom gathered themselves by the side of the pillar on the left. The two kinds of prayer (*vāram*) were sung in turn so that virtue might increase and vice might disappear. At the close of the prayer all the musical instruments held by the respective players were sounded.[3] The lute was in tune with the flute, and the *miṟutaṅkam* with the lute. The resounding note was in tune with the *miṟutaṅkam*, and the *āmantirikai* with the sound of the pot.[4] Each was in perfect harmony with the other. Two beats made one *maṇṭilam*, and eleven such *maṇṭilams* were executed in conformity with the established theatrical practice. When this musical act, called *antarakkoṭṭu*, was over, the auspicious *pālaippaṇ* was sung without the slightest violence to its rigid measure.

The four parts[5] of the auspicious song were suitably introduced. Beginning with three *maṇṭilams* (or *ottus*) it

1 The allotment of the places was according to the prescription of the *Sāstra* which Aṭiyārkkunallār styles as *nūl*, from which he quotes the mode of arrangement on the stage. (See p. 118).

2 Placing the right foot in the first entrance any new place

or building is considered to be auspicious even today in India.

3 For a similar expression see *Maṇi.*, canto vii, l. 45.

4 For a similar order for playing on musical instruments

see Cīvakacintāmaṇi, st. 124 and 675, comm. See also Iṟaiyaṉār

Akapporul, sūtra 40, comm.

5 The names of these four are ukkiram, turuvai, ābhōgam, and pirakalai.

Cila., p. 75.

3

ended with one *ottu* (*ēkatāḷam*); with this captivating *maṇṭilam* the *dēsi* dance came to an end.

Mātavi also danced the *vaṭuku*

dance.[1] Then it appeared as if the five-beat-mode of each of the two styles of dancing, *dēsi* and *vaṭuku*, was concentrated in one style —so captivating was her dance. In her quick movement she looked like a golden creeper animated with life. Because her dance was perfect and scientifically correct,[2] the king who protected the world, in due recognition, presented her with a green leaf-garland and one thousand and eight *kaḷañcus*[3] of gold, which was the customary present given to dancers who held the *talaikkōl* and exhi- bited their talents for the first time.

Fawn-eyed Mātavi[4]
handed over a garland to a hunch- backed woman,
and asked her to stand out in the street

1 In the *vaṭuku* style of dancing she began with *maṭṭattālam*, and ended with *ēkatālam* (single time-beat). *Cila*., p. 76.

2 *Nāṭṭiya-Naṉṉūl* is apparently a treatise dealing with *tāṇṭavam, nirutyam*, and *nāṭyam*, something like the *Bharatanāṭyaśāstra* in Sanskrit, now being published in the Baroda Sanskrit Series.

3 *Kaḷañcu-poṉ* was an ancient coin of Tamil land. The term *Kaḷañcu* often occurs in Tamil inscriptions, and means sometimes a coin and sometimes gold bullion of the proper standard of weight and fineness. (See *An. Rep. Ep.*, 1912, p. 65 and op. cit., 1916, p. 116). 'In an early Pāṇṭya inscription (No. 90 of 1908) it occurs as the equivalent of the Sanskrit *Kṛiṣṇakācha*, and Mr. H. W. Codrington of the Ceylon Civil Service informs me that in that island a coin of the *kaḷañcu* weight was called *kāhapaṇa*. No. 197 of appendix B gives *kaḷañcu* as the equivalent of *niṣka*.'
Thus writes the epigraphist, op. cit . p. 106.

4 From the expression *namkōṭi* in l. 166 it would be more appropriate if the words in ll. 164-6 were spoken by Mātavi's mother; but the commentators attribute them to Mātavi herself.

where the rich citizens of the city passed to

and fro, as if she was offering it[1] for sale, and to announce that 'this garland is worth a sum of 1008 *kaḻañcus* of very excellent gold. He who buys this garland becomes the husband of our creeper-like lady'.
The garland representing the large lotus-eyed Mātavi was purchased by Kōvalaṉ, and, accompanied by the hunchback, he entered Mātavi's bridal chamber, and as he embraced her he was captivated so much by her charms that he forgot
himself and did not like to part from her. In sooth, he
forgot his own unsullied home and wife.

VEṆPĀ

With golden bangles, Mātavi
of Pūmpukār exhi-
bited her skill on the dancing stage by word of mouth, in respect of numbers and letters, five *iyals* four *paṇs*, and eleven kinds of *kūttus*.

making her reputation spread on the earth.

1 The garland was not worth 1008 *kalañcus*. But it was the symbol for Mātavi who was worth 1008 *kalañcus* and it was announced that whosoever wanted to take her as his partner should be prepared to pay so much gold.

CANTO IV

ANTIMALAIC CIRAPPUCCEYKATAI

OR

IN PRAISE OF THE EVENING

AT the time when Mother Earth, enrobed by the waters of the deep, felt afflicted exclaiming, 'I do not see the mighty lord (the

Sun) who sent out his rays all over the world and ruled it with his unequalled single disk! Nor is it known where is the (prince) Moon who illumines the wide sky with his cool rays.' And when her four faces (the four directions) turned pale, her flower-eyes moist, and her whole form covered with dew like the chieftain, who occupies, with the aid of rebellious subjects, the kingdom of powerful kings during their absence, to the grief of loyal tax-paying subjects, Evening (the alien chief) made his triumphant entry into fertile old Pukār, to the grief of faithful wives left alone by their husbands, and to the delight of disloyal women enjoying the company of their secret lovers. It was then that the Kōvalar[1] sent forth from their flutes the *mullai* songs, the buzzing bee sucked the honey from the *mullai* flowers, the soft-footed southern breeze warded off the six-footed bee (*kuṟumpu*)[2] which had forced his way into unopened buds.

1

The term Kōvalar means Gōpālar or cowherds.

They are a community belonging to the region of the *mullai*. The whole Tamil land was classified into five regions, namely *marutam* (river-bed), *kuṟiñci* (hill), *neytal* (littoral tracts), *pālai* (deserts), and *mullai* (forests).

2 The six-footed bee is referred to by the term *kuṟumpu* as it acts like the Kuṟumpar,

a term which stands for petty chief. 118

CILAPPATIKARAM

(Nor was Kaṇṇaki alone in her sorry plight). Owing to their separation from their dear lords, other ladies who breathed heavily as bellows, abandoned the bedchamber[1] which they used during the hot season for that with narrow windows, which they used during the cold weather. They were sad that their breasts

could not be decked with sandal-paste or with strings of pearls. They did not go near the bed of cool flowers plucked from flower-pots and watery fields. They could no longer repose on beds which were made of the soft down shed by the swan when it was pairing with its loving mate. These unhappy women, who once, unperturbed, in *ūṭal*[2] (lovers' quarrel) with their loving husbands rolled their eyes between the bridges of their noses and the tips of their ears, were now in despair. Their long eyes, red with weeping, dropped pearl–like tears because of their loneliness.

(At such a time) with the swan's soft tread for her gentle gait, with the sweet–smelling and honey-hiding *āmpal* flower for her fragrance, with the blooming lotus for her rosy lips, with the black sand for her wavy hair, the ladylike[3] lake with the *nōtiram* melody of bard-bees opened her eyes, which were the fair *kuvaḷai* flowers, when the birds and fowls sent out from time to time

their shrill and loud notes,

as if they beat the drum and

1 Mention of five beds in the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*, st. 838.

2 *Ūṭal* is a term of much significance in Tamil love literature. (See the *Tirukkuṟal*, ch. 133. Cf. *pulavi*.)

3 The lake is compared to a lady. The blossoming *kuvaḷai* flowers in the lake are the lady's eyes which, as their petals open in the morning, represent the lady's awakening. The ancient custom was for members of a noble family to be roused by the singing of auspicious songs. In the allegory this is represented by the bees' humming round the lotuses.

blew the conch, till the dawn expelled the darkness of the night from the city which resembled the expansive sea.

One would say that in these watches of the dark night (*pakal*)[1] the fish-bannered prince (Cupid), going from place to place armed with his sugar-cane bow and flower-arrow,
stood excellent guard over the city.

1 Note the peculiar use of the term *pakal* meaning midnight.
Cf. *Maturaikkāñci*, l. 653; *Puṟam.*, st. 189, l. 3.

musical science[1] and could exhibit their faultless skill on flute and lute by sounding the seven notes; and finally the lower class of artists who excelled in several minor arts, had

their respective localities. All these places in the city went by the name of *maruvūrppākkam*.

In another part of the city there were the king's street,[2]
the car street with flying flags, the bazaar street, the broad
highway where highborn merchants lived on either side in
the turreted houses, the Brahmana street,[3] the streets of
physicians and astrologers[4] respectively, and of agricultural
communities, and the broad street having the residences
of those who dexterously bored holes in gems and pearls
and mounted them, and of those who polished the shells
and the conches that were worn as ornaments. There
were also separate quarters where dwelt *sūtas* and

māgadhas,[5] religious dancers astronomers,[6] mock-dancers, prostitutes, actresses,[7] maidens bearing flowers and betels, maid-servants,[8] bagpipe musicians, drummers, of different sorts, buffoons and jesters.

1 This may be interpreted also 'who had inherited their skill from their forefathers'.

2 See *Maṇi*., canto iv, ll. 37-8. The *Rājamārga* of Sanskrit literature.

3 It is interesting to see that the term *maṟaiyōr* is interpreted by the commentators as *pañcagrāmins*. In the light of the terms *bhūtagrāma* and *indriyagrāma* in Sanskrit literature, this term may refer to Brahmans who perform austerities by self-control.

4 See *Maṇi*., canto ii, l. 29.

5 Cf. Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra, Bk. X, ch. iii.

6 Maṇi., canto vii, l. 65.

7 ibid., canto xx, l. 30.

8 ibid., canto xxiv, l. 19.

In an extensive open space, on the outskirts of the city, were quarters occupied by cavalrymen with swift horses, elephant warriors, charioteers with lofty chariots and infantrymen with fearsome looks. This region was further celebrated by the presence of highly renowned great men. It went by the name of *paṭṭiṉappākkam*.

The central part of the city between the two divisions (*maruvūrppākkam* and *paṭṭiṉappākkam*) was open and looked like the battlefield where the armies of two great

monarchs could meet. Underneath the dense rows of trees were erected permanent booths and stalls. That was the market-place (*nāḷaṅkāṭi*)[1] where the din and bustle of sellers and buyers could be heard throughout the day.

On the day on which the moon approached the *cittirai* star in the month *cittirai* (i.e. on the full-moon day) the sacrifice of boiled grains, sweetened sesame balls, meat mixed with rice, flowers, incense, and toddy was offered by the elderly (*maṟava*) maidens; in fascinating dress, and as if devoid of shame at the altar in front of the guardian deity[2] who had arrived in obedience to the orders of the

Lord of the Dēvas, to ward off the evil which might be-

fall the victorious king (Mucukunda),[3]

they then enjoyed

1 The nālaṅkāṭi is literally a day-market. It was situated

in the central portion of the city, between the maṟuvūrppākkam

and the paṭṭiṉappākkam, the two broad divisions of the city.

2 For the work of the Būta, etc., see canto vi, ll. 7 ff

following, and the commentary thereon.

3 For a different version of the story see the Bhāgavata Purāṇa. Mucukunda is one of the three sons of Māndhāta and Bindumatī. His brothers are Purukutsa and Ambarīṣa (Bhāga. Pur., Bk. IX, ch. 6, st. 38). Hearing that Kālayavana, or simply Yavana, was carrying destruction to the Dēvas, Mucukunda

themselves in the *tuṇaṅkai*[1] and *kuravai* as if possessed with divinity and left the place with the loud prayer 'May the king of the land and all this vast kingdom not be troubled by hunger, disease or enmity but enjoy seasonal rains and prosperity'.

The valiant warriors residing in the suburbs (*maruvūrppākkam*) and the leaders of the army quartered in the city (*paṭṭinappākkam*), vied with one another in going first to the great altar to make the asseveration 'May all evil to our mighty king be warded off, and may you (the Būtam) stand firm on the side of those who propitiate you with offerings!' Stone-slingers, and different classes of soldiers who held shields stained with blood and human flesh, as well as lances, patted themselves on their shoulders, shouting exultingly, and cut off their dark-haired heads containing such fierce red eyes as seemed to burn those upon whom they looked, and willingly offered them upon the sacrificial altar (of the guardian deity) with the prayer that the conquering king might be ever victorious, when those headless trunks seemed to speak through the drums of untanned leather these words of thunder: 'We have given you our lives as a sacrifice: Accept them.'[2]

entered the cave, the residence of Yavana, and slew him, to the wonder of the Dēvas. Indra offered him a place of honour in heaven. But Mucukunda wanted to go on sleeping in that cave undisturbed for an unlimited period. Kṛishṇa met him and blessed him as a yōgin, (ibid., Bk. X, ch. 51). He undertook penance in the Badari *āsrama*.

1 The term tunaṅkai, otherwise known as

śiṅki (see Divā-

karam., st. 9) is the dance in which the dancers rested their hands on their hips. In the kuravai they grasped each other's hands in a circle.

2 The reference is to talai-pali, a very ancient custom prevalent in South India, bearing strong evidence to the early forms

Once Tirumāvaḷavaṉ[1] felt that there was no foe on either side[2] fit to fight with him and thinking, in his thirst for war, that there might be foes in the north, he had an auspicious day[3] chosen for taking out his sword, umbrella[4] and war-drum,[5] and he prayed to his guardian deity that he might be lucky enough to find an enemy fit to encounter his broad shoulders, and advanced in that direction. Finding the great Himalayas, the residence of gods, as the barrier arresting his further progress, he retreated with pride after engraving his tiger-emblem on its rocky side.

On his return, the king of the great Vacciranāṭu[6] whose sway extended as far as the roaring sea (in the east), gave

of Śakti worship. This is corroborated by the Pallava architecture. (See the interesting article, 'The Head offering to the Goddess in Pallava Architecture', of Dr. J. Ph. Vogel in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London, Vol. VI, Pt. II, 1931.) See also the Kalaimagaḷ, Vol. I, pp. 416 ff., where Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri translates the above contribution, and ibid., pp. 802 ff., where again Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar re-examines it in the light of literature.

1 Tirumāvaḷavaṉ is the name of Karikāl-Peruvaḷattāṉ, who was actuated by imperialism and lust of conquest.

2 Perhaps the Cēra and the Pāṇṭya kings. Cf. the closing lines of canto i, and the footnote.

3 Cf. Vāṇāṭ-kōṭal, (Pu. Por., veṇbā 'Vañji', st. 4).

4 Cf. Kuṭaināṭ-kōṭal, ibid., st. 3.

5 Muracunāṭ-kōṭal, Puṟam., st. 50 n.

6 Vajranāṭu on the banks of the river Sōṇai (Son). Its king held the status of an udāsīna or neutral of the Arthaśāstra literature. We are not able to locate this country definitely. Perhaps it is the region where the tribe Vajjis of the Jātakas lived. This was on the northern shores of the Ganges opposite to Magadha (Tam., Magada). See S, B. L. Cowell, Jātakas, Vol, VI, p. 120.

him a pearl canopy as tribute while the king of Magadha[1]

famous for his sword-play, and his enemy a while ago,

presented to him an audience-hall[2] (*paṭṭimaṇṭapam*). The

king of Avanti gave him a friendly present of a tall and

beautiful arch on the gateway. Though all these were

made to gold and gems, their technique was not known to human artists even of exceptional skill; they were long ago given to the ancestors of these three monarchs by the divine Maya in return for some valuable service rendered to him. When they were all placed together, they formed an artistic *maṇṭapam* much praised by great men.

(In addition to this) there was the open space (*veḷḷiṭai-maṉṟam*) where could be found many bundles of goods with marks indicative of the quantity,[8] weight and names of their new owners. Since there was neither gate nor lock nor watchman guarding them, thieves might sometimes be tempted to remove these bundles on

their heads.

And if they did so, the invisible deity guarding the place would make the thief go round and round the open plain, with the heavy burden on his head but would not permit him to pass away from there. The very thought of stealing anything made people quake with fear.[4]

1 The king of Magadha was the ari or enemy.

2 For paṭṭimaṇṭapam, see Maṇi., canto i, ll. 60-1. The hall where learned men assembled and held discourse. (See Tiruvācakam, paṭṭimaṇṭapam ēṟṟinai ēṟṟinai, 'śatakam' 49.) Naccinārkkiniyar holds the view that it was more an assembly of Sanskrit pandits. See Tolk., Porul., sūtra 490 comm.

3 The use of pictographic writing reminds us of South

India's intercourse with Egypt on the one hand Valley on the other.

and the Indus

4 One of the references to superstitious See also ll. 133-7,

belief of the times.

Next, there was the place (*ilañcimanram*) with the miraculous lake by bathing in and circumambulating which all hunchbacks and cripples, the dump, the deaf and lepers were cured of their infirmities and gained health and grace of form.

Then there was the open space where

stood the tall shining stone (*neṭumkalniṉṟamaṉṟam*), by the worship of and going round which were cured all those who had grown mad by being deceived (into consuming drugs), those who were suffering from palsy as a result of poison, those bitten by sharp-toothed venomous serpents and those who were possessed by devils with protruding eyes.

There was again the meeting-place of four roads (*būtacatukkam*) where stood the Būta, proclaiming in a voice loud enough to be heard as far as four *kāvatams*[1] that he would bind with his rope and devour by thrashing the wicked who assumed the garb of asceticism to cover their sins,[2] cunning wives who practised vice in secret, intriguing ministers, men who coveted other men's wives, and witnesses who gave false evidence, and

tale-bearers.

Further there was the place (*pāvaimanṟam*) where stood the statue which would never open its mouth but would weep by shedding tears on every occasion when there was a deviation from the path of justice by the king, or when partiality was shown in his court of justice by wrong interpretation of the law.

1 The municipal limits of the city of Pukār seem to have been ten miles in circumference. The topographical description of ancient Pukār approximates to the modern city of Madras. A kāvatam or kātam refers to a distance of two and a half miles.

2 Six kinds of heinous offences are mentioned here. It may be noted in passing that the Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra prescribes heavy punishments in the case of pseudo-sannyāsins, false witnesses, adulterers, etc.

Sacrifice was offered in all the five aforementioned places[1] held in veneration by men of wisdom who knew the real truth about them.

Then the auspicious drum was removed from the temple called Vaccirakkōṭṭam,[2] placed on the nape of the elephant adorne with the girdle, and conveyed to the temple where the young white elephant stood.[3] This was indicative of the beginning and the end of Indra's festival. After this the auspicious tall flag (bearing the ensign of the white elephant) which stood in the temple of the Kalpaka (*tarunilaikkōṭṭam*) tree was hoisted aloft in the sky.

On the verandas of the big mansions[4] were to be seen artistic planks set with emeralds and diamonds whereon stood coral pillars. At the entrance of these mansions

were suspended ornamental hangings having the shape of

the *makara* fish from whose teeth (horns), carved with

symbols representing auspicious things and adorned with

kimpuri, hung strings of pearls in series. The streets

were further beautified by golden pitchers filled with water,

glittering *pālikai* vessels, lamps wrought in the shape of

1 As many as five maṉṟams are mentioned here.

2 See Maṇi., canto i, ll. 27-8. (Sans., Vajrakōṣṭa.)

3 The temple of the Airāvata, Indra's elephant.

4 For a similar celebration of Indra's festival see Vīramitrōdaya, pp. 425-33; Mhb., 'Ādi.', ch. 64. For the origin of the Indra cult in Rig Vēdic India, see A. C. Das, Rig Vedic Culture, 1925, pp. 56 ff. It would appear from the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (Pt. V, ch. 10), that the ancient cowherd communities celebrated Indra's festival, and this was discontinued from the time of Kṛiṣhṇa who wanted the Gōpas to take to the worship of cattle and mountains which alone afforded them food and occupation. A festival of Indra is referred to as being celebrated by King Sālavāhana and his subjects in the Kālakācārya Kathā (see W. Norman Brown's

The Story of Kālaka, 1933, p. 83).

maidens,[1] golden flags, pure white feather fans, fragrant pastes and many other ornamentations.

There were assembled in these streets the five great groups of the king's councillors (*aimperumkuḻu*)[2] and the eight great bodies of the king's retinue (*eṇpērāyam*),[3] princes of the blood royal, sons of the merchant aristocracy, fast riders on horseback, groups of elephant riders, and charioteers whose chariots were drawn by horses, for the glorification of their highly reputed ruler's sway over this wide world. One thousand and eight kings bore on their heads gold pots filled with cool and holy water render- ed fragrant by floating pollen of flowers of the Kāvēri, taken from where it

joins the sea, and performed the bathing ceremony of the Lord of Gods, to the delight of the earth and the admiration of heaven.

Joy prevailed everywhere on account of Indra's festi- val in the temple of the great Lord who was never born (Śiva), in the temple of the six-faced red Lord (Subrahmaṇya), in the temple of Vāliyōn (Baladēva)[4] whose complexion was like the white conch-shell, in the temple of Neṭiyōn (Vishṇu) of the dark colour, and in the temple of Indra of the victorious umbrella and the pearl garland.

1 Cf. Maṇi., canto i, l. 45.

2 For aimperumkuḻu see Maṇi., canto i, l. 17; Tolk, 'Kiḻavi', sūtra 57; Naccinārkkiṉiyar's commentary; minister, purōhita, commander, ambassador, and spy.

3 For a twofold interpretation of the term eṉpērāyam, see Dikshitar, Studies in Tamil Literature and History,

pp. 204-5.

4 The temple of Baladēva is mentioned, besides that of Indra. In later days these two cults have become extinct. See R. G. Bhandarkar's Vaishnavism, Saivism, pp. 3, 9, 11; also M. Raghava Aiyangar, Āḻvārkālanilai, p. 7. See also p. 50 supra.

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On one side the Vēdic sacrifices,[1] as ordained by Brahmā, were faultlessly performed, and on another the festivals pertaining to the four classes of Dēvas[2] and the eighteen Gaṇas[3] and different other gods, were separately and correctly conducted. Inside the city were the Jaina temples and other Dharma institutions;[4] outside were Śrīkōil[5] and other sacred establishments. The Purāṇa reciters[6] also discharged their duties in another place. Elsewhere, the king's victorious chariot, with its banners flying, was taken out gracefully to annihilate the enemy-kings and others. In another place rose high immeasurable melodies produced by the flute, the drum, expert players on the *yāḻ* and the human voice of the Pāṇar.[7] Thus in that vast city, every lane and

1 This shows the popularity of the Vēdic sacrifices.

2 The four classes are Vasus, Divākaras, Rudras and Maruts; all of them are Vēdic deities. In reality tradition speaks of thirty-three classes of Gods—the eight Vasus, twelve Ādityas (Divākara), eleven Rudras, and the two Maruts.

3 One classification of the eighteen groups runs as follows: apsaras (?) nāgas, siddhās, gandharvas, vidyādharas, piśācas, tarakas bōga-būmiyar, kimpuruṣas. śēnas, asuras, butas, munis, dēvas, garuḍas, rākṣasas, yakṣas and cāranars.

4 This may refer to the Jaina or the Buddhist institutions or even to those of the orthodox religion. But the term paḷḷi shows

that there

was a school of dissenting sects, especially the Jaina.

5 This is not necessarily a reference to the temple of Lakṣhmī.

6 The reading of the Purāṇas in the public places so as to be heard by all classes was a feature of ancient days. Cf. Harsacarita where the Vāyu Purāṇa is said to have been read in public for the benefit of the masses.

7 The Pāṇar were a class of minstrels and masters of music.

by-lane were alive with the sound of the drum by night and day.

Because she had not been separated from her lover,

Mātavi, wearing beautifully serrated ear-rings, had not

lost her charms.

Mingled with the united fragrance of the

mātavi flower,[1] the home-grown *mullai*, jasmine, the *mayilai* flower, the pot-grown blue-lotus, and the red *kaḻunir*,[2] and pleased with love's delight, seeking sport in the pleasure garden made fragrant by the lovable flower-buds, entering into the fresh aroma of flowers in the ever-

mirthful market-place[3]

ever-wet sandal-paste,

caressing the frankincense and the

and continuously indulging in the

joyous lovers' speech and laughter,

roamed about the city accompanied by

the mountain breeze

the *iḻi*-sounding bee

and by the mild rays of early summer, in the same way

that Kōvalaṉ went about accompanied by minstrels singing

the *kural* tune and by his city-companions skilled in love

affairs.

One such companion spoke of his sweetheart: 'Has

the moon who roams in the beautiful sky become afraid of its enemy, the serpent Rāhu,[4] and left the sky to appear here in your disguise by carrying a heavy cloud on its head, parting with the little hare, and painting on its face the figures of two fishes (in the place of the two eyes) with the *kumiḻa* flower (the nose) between them?'

1 This can also be interpreted thus:
did not become the bud that people love,

'The red mātavi flower
but grew into a beautifully bent root without losing its redness'.

2 A categorical list of fragrant flowers

which would in-

crease sensuous desire.

3
Here a full description of the nāḷaṅkāṭi is furnished.

4 Rāhu devouring the moon, says the legend, causes lunar eclipses, and levouring the sun, solar eclipses.

A second said: 'Does the flash of lightning nurtured with great care by Cupid of the fish-flag (whose body was burnt by the spark of Śiva's third eye),[1] intend to come down here and regain it by drinking the cool nectar drops of the moon?'

A third said: 'Has the honeyed lotus, in the course of searching for its companion (Lakṣhmi), transformed itself into two dark *kuvaḷai* flowers, one on each side of the *kumiḻa* blossom? Or has it blossomed again into the red *ilavam* and into jasmine to

proclaim that it is in this flourishing city that the goddess Lakṣhmi[2] has entered so that the monarch of the wide world may greatly prosper?'

Yet another said: 'Is the god of the devouring mouth (Yama), who destroys all and who, in fear of the righteous king, gave up the duty imposed on him and changed his male form for that of a girl, with a smiling countenance and covered with bashfulness, speaking words as soft as the notes of the pleasing *yāḻ*?'

With such frivolous talk the broad-shouldered lovers gained victory over their sweethearts, chaste as Arun- dati, who looked like a great army of the bodiless god (Cupid), and prevented them from running away from their presence by closely clasping them in voluptuous embrace and (thereby) smearing their chests all over with the sandal solution which adorned the breasts of these women. By thus giving them the pleasure of

their union,

1 The reference is to Siva burning the God of Love. For a full description of the legend, see Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 154, 194 and 245.

2 The term used in the text is uḷvarikkōlam. A classic example is that of the Pāṇḍavas in disguise in Virāṭanagara. See below, canto viii, l. 89, Aṭiyārkkunallār's comm.

they made their wives' lotus eyes lose the colour of the *kuvaḷai* and gain instead a reddish tinge (indicative of sleep- lessness). The people of the city in a state of helplessness and tremor, spoke to themselves, 'If our great feast can do nothing to remove the redness from the eyes of our women-folk, is there any medicine at all that can cure this in the wide earth?'

It was then the middle day of the festival in

honour of the King of Gods (Indra).[1] The dark left eye of Kaṇṇaki and the red right eye of Mātavi throbbed and were filled with tears of sorrow and of joy respectively like the *kaḷunīr* flower which shakes when the sweet pollen inside it emits honey and loses its external colour.

1 In the prehistoric days of Tamil India it appears that a certain Cōḷa monarch, by name Tuñkaiyilerinta-toṭittōṭ-cempiyaṉ, introduced Indra's festival to be celebrated annually in his capital city Pūmpukār. The duration of the festival was twenty-eight days. The festival continued to be celebrated by succeeding monarchs, as it came to be thought that by not celebrating it, the Catukkabūtam, engaged on the orders of Indra to check sin and sinners, would leave the city thus leading it to desolation and ruin. (See Maṇi., canto i, 'Viḻāvaraikkātai'.) Years rolled by and Neṭumuṭikkiḷḷi became the monarch. Once when he was spending some time in the royal park, a certain beautiful girl presented herself before him, and at his desire, lived with him as his wife. One day she suddenly disappeared, and when the King was aimlessly inquiring of passers-by, a certain Cāraṇa informed him that she was Pilivaḷai, daughter of

Vaḷaivāṇan, King of the Nākanāḍu. and that she would return no more, but would send her son. The ship in which the son was sent foundered, and moved by great grief the King failed to celebrate Indra's festival for the year. On this Maṇimēkalai the deity cursed that the city be swallowed by the sea. It so happened, and Aṟavana-Aṭikaḷ with his disciples left for Vañci (ibid, cantos xxiv-vi).

CANTO VI

KATALATU KATAI

OR

SEA BATHING

ONCE a Vidyādara hero celebrated, along with his lady-love of the long fish-like eyes, a feast in honour of the god of love in the extensive, fragrant and flowery grove in a Cēḍi[1] on the slopes of the silver-peaked Kailāsa.[2] He then realized that that was the day[3] when Indra's festival would commence in the flourishing city of

Pukār

wife,

(Campāpati) in South India, and he
'We shall go and witness the place

said to his
where the
great Būtam eats the sacrifice offered to it (in com-
memoration of its) having carried out Indra's orders
to ward off the evil effects of the arrows aimed by
hosts of swift-going Asuras against the terror-stricken
but best of men, the victorious king Mucukunda,[4]
while he was keeping watch, tiger-like over Indra's
city.[5]

1 The Cēḍi is the city of the Vidyadaras according to Jaina

literature. Cf. Civakacintāmaṇi, p. 170, st. 546-(2).

2 The Kailāsa Hills were the abode of the celestial Gaṇa, by name the Vidyādaras, among others. 154.

Cf. Matsya Purāṇa, ch.

3 The commentator says the same day next month.

4 Tiruntuvēlaṇṇal occurring in the text is a reference to Mucukunda, once the King of the Cōlas.

5 This city is known as Amarāvati in Sanskrit literature,

'We shall also see the five famous

assembly-halls[1] of unrivalled architectural beauty, given by Indra in gratitude and refitted on the earth by the monarch's ancestor who once kept guard over Amarāvati.[2]

'(Agastya) finding that Nārada[3] did not play on the vīṇa properly, or appropriately, to the song of the dancing Urvaśī before the thousand-eyed Indra[4], or to the song of her accompanist (*tōriyamaṭantai*) who sang in the *vāram* which did not enrapture his ear, laid a curse, "Let the lute lose its charm, and let this dancer be born on the earth." In the line of that Urvaśī was born Mātavi with her hood like *alkul.* (In Pukār) we shall witness her dance.

'My dear coral-mouthed, slender-waisted girl, we shall there worship Indra, the lord of gods'. So saying, he started showing his lady-love the many-crested Himalayas,[5] the ever-flowing Ganges, the city of Ujjain,[6] the Vindhya forests, the Tirupati hills,[7] and the

1 Five great manrams are mentioned here.

2 There is a Tamil tradition that the ancient Cōla monarch Mucukunda went to help Indra when Amarāvati was besieged by the Asuras.

3 Nārada, the divine music master, and author of Sīkṣa, a musical treatise of the orthodox school. Because he did not play properly on the lute, the sage Agastya cursed his instrument.

4 This is similar to the Sanskrit term śahasrākṣa.

5 The geographical data are furnished. The Kailāsa Hills are on the Himalayan slopes. The way to Pukār lay through the Ganges, Ujjain, the Vindhyas, the Tirupati hills, and the Kāvēri tracts.

6 Ujjain is an ancient city much celebrated in Sanskrit literature.

7 Vēnkatam, or the Tirupati hills, is celebrated in ancient

Tamil literature of the Caṅkam age. The Āḻvārs

refer to it, and

Kāvēri tracts overburdened with crops, and finally reached Pukār, enveloped by flowery groves. He showed her also the city, after performing the worship of Indra in the prescribed manner, and then witnessed the celebration of the enjoyable festival in that ancient and affluent town.

Said he then (of his fair companion): 'My dear, thou

wilt hear the *dēvapāni*[1] in honour of Vishṇu, the four songs

in honour of the four *būtams* worshipped respectively by

the four castes, and the song in honour of the Moon

roaming in the sky for the benefit of all. Afterwards

thou wilt see: The *koṭukoṭṭi*,[2] danced by Siva, Umā

keeping time on one side, on the burial-ground where Bārati (Kāḷi), danced with faultless rhythm and avoiding wrong time-measures, when the big fire-tipped arrow obeyed His command to burn the three cities (of the Asuras) at the request of the Dēvas;

'The *pāṇṭaraṅka*[3] dance which Siva, in the form of

Bārati,[4] displayed before the four-faced Brahmā standing

in His chariot;

Pēyāḻvār speaks of it as Tirumalai Iyarpati (63 and 75). See also

Kamba-Rāmāyaṇa. Kiṣkinda, 'Nadavitta Paṭalam',

st. 26-8.

1 *Devapani* is not a celestial song but a song sung in honour of the God. Dēvapāṇi is of two kinds: śirudēvapāṇi. perumdēvapāṇi and

2 *Kotum-kotti* is the original word according

to Naccinārk-
kiniyar. See Kali., 'Kaṭavuḷ'. For an actual description of the dance see canto xxviii, ll. 67-75. The translator has not been able to find parallels from the Sanskrit and other works corroborating all the eleven kinds of dancing mentioned here.

3 *Pāndaranka* is again a dance attributed to Siva.

4 *Barati-arangam*, the place where Bārati Bāravi danced.

(Sarasvati) or

'The *alliyam*[1] dance performed by the dark-hued Vishnu (*añjaṉavaṇṇaṉ*) after disposing of the treacherous devices of Kamsa;[2]

'The *mallu* dance performed (by the same deity) after the destruction of the Asura (Bāṇa);[3]

'The *tuṭi* dance (of Subrahmaṇya) in the midst of the sea, which itself served as the dancing-hall, following the destruction of the demon Cūra[4] who hid himself there;

'The *kuṭai*[5] (umbrella-dance) danced by (Subrah- maṇya) lowering the umbrella before the Asuras who gave up their arms in great distress;

1 The alliya dance is said to be one among the ten dances engaged in by Kṛishṇa.

2 Kamsa, the uncle of Kṛishṇa, wanted to kill the latter by means of a number of villainous guiles. One of them was to send an Asura follower of his in the guise of an elephant by name Kuvalayāpīḍa. Kṛishṇa found it out, and killed him. See Bhāga Pur., Bk. X, ch. 43, st. 2-15. See also Viṣ. Puṛ., Bk. V, ch. 20.

3 Bāṇa was an Asura with a thousand arms. He was the

son of Bali and Kōṭara. His capital was called Sōṇitapuram. He had a daughter Uṣā. Aniruddha, son of Pradyumna and grandson of Krishṇa, carried her away. Hence Bāṇa had him imprisoned. Krishṇa went to his grandson's rescue, and chopped off Bāṇa's thousand hands. See Bhāga. Pur., Bk. X, ch. 62 and 63. Cf. Cūṭāmaṇi.

4. This refers to the legend of the killing of the Asura Cūrapatma by Subrahmaṇya. Even today this festival is celebrated in all Siva temples in connexion with what is known as Skandaśaṣṭi, the sixth day in the dark-half of the month of Kārtikai. For details of the legend see Kandapurāṇam, § Cūrapaṉmaṉvatai. The reference is to the 'war-dance of triumph on the heaving wave-platform of the oceanic stage, to the accompaniment of the rattle

of his drum (tuṭi)'.

5 It is not possible to trace this legend. To venture a con-

jecture, the reference is to the greatest victory

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of the baby

'The *kuṭam* (pot-dance)[1] exhibited by Vishṇu (of the world-measuring stride) after walking through the streets of Bāṇasura's extensive city;

'The *pēṭi*[2] danced by Kāma (Cupid) who changed his male form to that of an hermaphrodite;

'The *marakkāl* dance of Māyavaḷ (Durgā)[3] when She could not stand the wily deeds of the cruel Asuras;

Subrahmaṇya, six days old, over the great Tārakāsura and his satellites, a match for Viṣhṇu, Indra and other Gods. See Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 160. It is said that Subrahmaṇya 'screened his face with a parasol, and played in exultant derision the kuṭaikkūttu or the umbrella-dance'. This is sometimes performed during temple processions when 'the God's umbrella-bearer cuts some capers with his unwieldy parasol; but the kāvaṭikkūttu is a greater favourite in these days in Murukaṉ's worship and festivities.' T. A. S. Vol. II, p. 185. Cf. Nighaṇṭu, 14th ed., p. 179. For the sculptured figures representing the two varieties called the kuṭaikkūttu and the kāvaṭikkūttu, see the two Yāḷi panels flank- ing the entrance of the sanctum of the Adbhuta-Nārāyaṇa temple at Tirukkaḍaittannam (Chenganachery Taluk). T.A.S., Vol. II. p. 187.

1 This variety of dancing also has no counterpart in the Sanskrit Nāṭya treatises. 'Its origin has to be traced to the purely pastoral pursuits of its votaries, the shepherds, who eventually came to consider it as one of the three favourite dances of the

God Vishṇu in his special manifestation as Gōpāla, the Divine Shepherd.' The Vaishṇava Āḻvārs refer to this (see Periāḻvār Tirumoḻi, Nācciyār Tirumoḻi, etc.). It is popular even now in the uriyaṭi festival in commemoration of the sports of the baby Kṛishṇa. The reference in the text is to the occasion of the defeat

of Bāṇāsura in his capital of Sōṇitapura (Sōṇagaram). Cf. account in the Tiruvaraṅkakkalampakam.

the

2

For the pēṭi dance, see Maṇi., canto iii, l. 125.

3 Durgā is otherwise known as Mahisāsuramardanī See also canto xii, ll. 65-6.

'The *pāvai* dance[1] of Lakṣmī when the Asuras clad in warlike attire ceased (from battle)

;

'And the *kaṭayam* dance[2] of lady Indrāṇī

standing in the field on the northern gate (of Bāṇa's city).

'Thou wilt see, my dear, the above-named eleven dances and the songs appropriate to them, acted and sung by the respective dancers with suitable garments and gestures, and in erect as well as bending postures, accord- ing to the established conventions.

'This is Mātavi, descended from the line of the great Mātavi mentioned by me when we were in the grove rich with the pollen of sweet flowers.' Thus said the highly distinguished Vidyādara entranced by the whole prospect.

Kōvalaṉ, who was in the state of *ūṭal* (love-quarrel), was sorry to see the end of that Indra festival, which consisted of dancing in different kinds of attire, accom- panied by the chiming of anklets, and which had been witnessed incognito by the denizens of Heaven.

To please him (so that his dejection

might not gall him further), she (Mātavi) bathed her fragrant black hair, soft as flowers, till it shone, in the perfumed oil prepared by mixing up ten kinds of astringents, five spices, and thirty-two herbs soaked in water; she dried it in fuming incense,

and perfumed the different plaits,[3] with the thick paste of

1 See Maṇi., canto iii, ll. 116 f.

2 It is rather difficult to identify this incident. The Tamil name for Indrāṇi is Ayirāni.

3 One of the many references to show that five plaits of hair were generally worn by Tamil ladies, especially when they were young.

the musk-deer. She adorned her little feet, reddened by dye, by wearing choice rings (*pili*)[1] on her fair and slender toes, and on her ankles becoming ornaments known as *pariyakam*, *nūpuram*, *pāṭakam*, *sataṅkai*, and *ariyakam*.[2] She put ornaments on her rounded thighs. Over her waist was a girdle made of thirty-two strands of big pearls worn over a blue cloth embroidered with the figures of flowers. Round her upper arms she had armlets studded with pearls together with attractive bangles of precious stones (*kāmar-kaṇṭikai*). Round her soft-haired wrists were beautiful bracelets (*cūṭagam*) in which was set the costliest gem in front with diamonds all round, gold bangles, bangles of nine gems (*pariyakam*), conch bangles, and bangles of coral. On to her tiny fingers, red as the *kāntal* flower, so as to hide them, she slipped a ring bent into the shape of an open-mouthed fish, and a highly brilliant and lustrous ring of gems, and a round ring glittering with rubies and brilliant diamonds.[3]

Her delicate and beautiful neck was adorned with a chain necklace called *nuṇṭoṭar*, with a fine string of exquisite workmanship and with a garland. Added to these was a string of ornamental gems held by a clasp, which covered the small nape of her neck.[4]

1 Pili is in use even today, and it is considered inauspicious if it is not worn by a girl on her marriage.

2 Here note the luxurious life led by the ancient Tamils.

Some of the ornaments and finery are mentioned. These have been examined by S. Somasundara Desikar in a contribution to Kaḷaimagaḷ, Vol. I, pp. 284-8.

3 This and the following lines show the number and variety of jewels and clothes in vogue in those ancient days. Some of them have now gone out of use.

4 Piṉṟāli is the term used by the Commentators in this connexion.

A pair of ear-rings, in which emeralds alternated with diamonds, glittered in her beautiful ears. In her dark tresses becoming head-ornaments such as *daivavutti* (also *sīdēvi*), *valampuri* (also *talaippālai*, sea-conch), *toyyakam* and *pullakam* were set.[1] She (Mātavi) gave Kōvalaṉ the happiness of union and of *ūṭal*, and stayed in her excellent nuptial chamber.

It was the full moon day in that ancient, awe-inspiring city. When she saw

people in search of amusement hurrying to the beach, fragrant with the *tāḻai*, Mātavi became eager to follow them. At that time the swan uttered its cry from lotuses in the tanks; cocks sent out their clarion call betokening the approach of the dawn; Venus[2] shone on high, and darkness died away.

Kōvalaṉ wore sparkling jewels on his garlanded chest, and like the prodigal cloud, mounted his mule, while the deer-eyed Mātavi got into her chariot (*vaiyam*).[3] They passed through the bazaar street beautified by towering mansions in which rich merchandise was stored in a million bundles. Here the beautiful lamps were glittering and some were decked with flowers.

1 This is said to be a head ornament of two sections called teṉpalli and vaṭapalli.

2 Tam., veḻḻi; Sans., sukra.

3 This vehicle may be kollāvaṇṭi, a

cart drawn by bullocks, or kūṭārappaṇṭi, a cart with a hooded top. The editor of the text notes in this connexion that in the Malaināṭu (p 182), the vehicle is known as kōlārvaṇṭi. From this description of Kōvalaṉ riding a mule, and Mātavi a vehicle drawn by bullocks, we have to infer that these were used by persons of rank in the early centuries of the Christian era. The use of horses for vehicles had not come into practice.

Maidens (*tāsiyar*) everywhere scattered flowers,[1] tender grass (*aṟuku*), and paddy, as being auspicious, and shone in their jewels. In this street[2] the Goddess Lakṣmi seemed to dwell, and on its two sides people were passing irregularly.

They then entered into the central highway of the city[3] rich with the wealth of sea-borne goods and reached the *cēri* regions on the seashore where the flags on high seemed to say: 'In these stretches of white sand can be seen different kinds of goods brought in ships by foreign merchants, who have left their native homes and settled here.' There were burning the lamps of those who sold dyes, sandals, flowers, scents, and all varieties of sweets, the lamps of dexterous goldsmiths, the lamps of those who, sitting in a row, sold *piṭṭu*, the black broad lamps placed on lamp-stands by the sellers of muffins, the lamps in front of the miscellaneous shops of girl-vendors, the lamps of fishmongers glimmering here and there, beacon-lights erected to guide ships on the seashore,[4] lamps taken out to sea by fishermen in their boats as they went a-fishing with nets, nightlong lights set up by foreigners[5] speaking

1 The habit of ladies both in the evening and early morning. Whether Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ by the term tāśiyar cannot be said.
means prostitutes,

2 A description of the bazaar and other streets in Pukār before daybreak.

3 This is maruvūrppākkam and the bazaar street was in paṭṭiṉappākkam.

4 This bears testimony to the existence of lighthouses and a large volume of trade by sea.

5 This testifies to the custom of lighting the streets. See Perumpāṇā, ll. 349-51; Maṇi., canto i, l. 16; Puṟam., st. 60,

different languages, and finally the lamps lit by the watch- men of (the warehouses containing) valuable merchandise.

The illumination of all these lights which were beyond counting, was so great that the seashore[1] with its aloe hedges appeared more beautiful than the cultivated tracts with their fragrant lotus-ridges; even a small mustard-seed could be seen if it lay on the fine sands stretched out like fine flour.

Thither came creeper-like Mātavi with a group of her playmates. There lay in repose ships which were filled with countless legions of hill-produce and sea-produce.[2]

In one place on the seaside were grouped together princes and their retinue, as also merchant princes and their confidantes; there were again other groups of maidens skilled in dance and song, in curtained enclosures. Their multi-coloured clothes and many-sounding tongues[3] resembled the uproar inevitable on the festive occasion when king Karikāla[4], whose great fame reached the celestial world, celebrated the first freshes in the Kāveri, and came to be mingled with the

unceasing tumult caused

1 Here follows a fine description of the beach in the evening.

2 This again testifies to the rich sea-borne trade.

3 See Akam., st. 376.

4 Cila., canto vii, l. 4. This shows that some festivity was connected with the first freshes. It may be noted in passing that the Coḷa king, Karikāla was the originator of the festival of the first freshes of the Kāvēri. This is quite in keeping with the statement of the Paṭṭinappālai that he was the founder of the capital Kāvēripaṭṭinam. Being Kāvirināṭaṉ or the Lord of the Kāvēri tracts, it is but natural that Karikāla was impelled by desire to institute a festival for the great service done by the river especially to the Coḷa-dēśa. A modern relic of this ancient festival is

by men and women of the four castes crowding on the narrow place where the great river Kāvēri joined the sea.

In the midst of that tumult the long-eyed Mātavi, soft as a flower, took the pleasure-giving tuneful-stringed lute from the hands of the fatigued Vasantamāla. There, on a white-legged couch with a canopy of picturesque paintings,[1] surrounded by a screen set on the newly-spread sands in the shade of a *punnai* tree standing in the wide expanse enclosed by the flowering *kaitai* which swept away the foulness of the (fish-smelling) sea, Mātavi enjoyed the company of Kōvalan.

what is known as the patinettāmperukku, literally freshes on the 18th day of the month of Āṭi. It is a social function in which children, ladies and others take part. On the evening of that day,

food of different kinds is taken to the riverside and after prayers

to the river for its continual flow, the members of the family par-

take of the food.

The children float old books, cadjan leaves,

and sometimes manuscripts of rare books in the floods, and swim

in the water and enjoy themselves in different ways.

1

Further evidence of the art of painting in the

Tamiḻnāṭu.

Canto VII

KANALVARI

OR

THE SEASHORE SONG

Kaṭṭurai

After worshipping with her hands Mātavi

removed the lute faultless in respect of *pattar*,[1] *kōṭu*,[2] *āṇi* and strings, from its fancy-coverings, its body adorned with flowers, which looked like a beauteous bride with her black eyes darkened with collyrium. And she began to produce its eight different sounds, *paṇṇal*, *parivaṭṭaṇai*, *ārāital*, *tai- varal*, the majestic *celavu*, *viḷaiyāṭṭu*, *kaiyūḻ*, and the sweet *kuṟumpōkku*, in order to satisfy herself as to their correctness. Her lustrous little fingers ornamented with ruby rings manipulating the different strings resembled a hive of humming-bees. Next she tested by ear the eight different tunes,[3] *vārtal*, *vaṭittal*, *untal*, *uṟaḻtal*, the fair *uruttal*, *teruṭṭal*, *aḷḷal*, and the beautiful *paṭṭaṭai*. Passing the instrument to Kōvalaṉ's outstretched hand, she said, 'It is not my object to command. Please let me know the *tāḷam*.' He too began playing odes to the Kāvēri and

1 The Cīvakacintāmaṇi styles these four faults as diseases

of the vīṇa (st. 1720).

2 Parimēlaḷakar speaks of these ical as pāṭaltoḻil (duties).

Kuṟaḷ, st. 573, and Naccinārkkiṉiyar on the Cīvakacintāmaṇi (st, 657) speaks of them as kalaittoḻil. What these eight terms mean are explained in extenso by Arumpatavuraiāciriyar.

3 See the commentary of Arumpatavuraiāciriyar; also

Poruṉar, l. 23, where four of these eight tunes

C—13

are mentioned.

songs appropriate to the seashore (*kāṉalvari*)[1] to the great delight of Mātavi.

TO THE KAVERI[2]

'Hail to thee, Kāvēri! Even if our Cōḷa king, whose garlanded parasol is as white as the moon, extends his righteous sceptre far and weds the Ganges,[3] thou wilt not sulk. I have learnt, O fish-eyed one, that not sulking, even though he weds the Ganges, is the supreme virtue of chaste ladies. Hail to thee Kāvēri!

'If our king, whose garlanded umbrella is white and stable, extends his unbending sceptre far, weds Kaṉṉi (Kaṉyākumari), O Kāvēri! thou wilt not sulk. Hail to thee! I have learnt that not sulking, fish-eyed Kāvēri, even if he weds Kaṉyākumari,[4] is the mighty virtue of ever-chaste ladies. Live long, O Kāvēri!

'Hail to thee, Kāvēri! Thou walkedst (flowed) along, listening to the songs of the ploughmen,[5] the resonance of the sluices, the roar of the breaking waters, and the noise

1 Kaṭaṟkāṉal-varippāṇi is of two kinds: teyvamcuṭṭiya-varippāṭṭu and makkaḷaiccuṭṭiya-varippāṭṭu. Of these two the former consists of kūṭaicceyyuḷ and vāracceyyuḷ.

2 Stanzas 2·4 go by the name of āṟṟuvari,

a river.
literally an ode to

3 The implication is that the Cōḻa king's sway, as has been already said, extended upto the Ganges tracts in the north.

4 The southern limit of the Cōḻa kingdom was Kanyā-kumari, the Cape Comorin of modern days.

5 This points to the fertility of the soil and testifies to the irrigational works on the Kāvēri tracts. Cf. Paṭṭiṉappālai, ll. 277-91; also A.S.S.I., Vol. IV, p. 204 ff.

of the festive crowd celebrating thy freshes.[1] All this flow of thine, along with the din of merrymaking, is expressive of the prosperity of our king, who possesses soldiers with unbridled tongues. Hail to thee, Kāvēri!'

Again[2]

'How can we innocent people understand, sir, that unrighteous men again and again show the sea-god[3] to our lady with long eyes like dark flowers, and make pious vows only to be broken. Our city is Pukār where the water-lily opens its blossoms at the sight of white conch bracelets and pearls, mistaking them for the moon and constellation of stars which spread their white rays.

'How can we know, sir, of those lovers, who approach us on this beach from behind, with presents in their hands, and then turn out to be, strangers expecting us to beg of them? Our home is Pukār where the bee is bewildered, unable to distinguish the (blue) eyes of maidens from two blue flowers blooming in the reflection of the moon (on the waters).

1 The first freshes of the year in the Kāvēri were the occa- sion of a carnival in which all

classes of people from the king down to the peasant took a leading part. Tamil tradition is that Karikāla was the originator of this festival. See p. 129, supra.

2 Stanzas 5-7 are a glowing description of the richness and simplicity of the city of Pukār. These words are spoken by the heroine's maid to her mistress's lover, who has come with a present in his hand. The theme (tuṟai) of these stanzas is said to be -varaivu-kaṭāyavai. The idea is that the maid pretends to refuse presents and seems to insist on a regular marriage.

3 The sea-god described is Varuṇa. According to Sanskrit tradition he is the Lord of all waters, and figures prominently in the Vēdic pantheon.

'Our city, sir, is Pukār where the sounding conch is

buffeted by the big dashing waves and is driven ashore and ruins our maidens' sand-castles,[1] These maidens, the flowers in whose hair are loosened and sway about, grow

angry, and plucking the water-lilies from their garlands with tender fingers they throw them at the conch. Passers-by seeing these (flowers scattered on the ground) think they are observing eyes.'

Again

'To wipe out the appearance of the ploughed sands in which the conches lay buried, the heavily-flowering *puṉṉai* had scattered its pollen-laden flowers on that sea-shore. The straight fish-shaped eyes in her full-moon face have caused love sickness incurable by medicine, but curable by the lady's soft and yellow-spotted breasts.[2]

'Pretending[3] to drive away the birds hovering around the foul-smelling dried fish on the beach, a maid holds in her hands fragrant jasmine from a young plant, with swarms of bees roaming about her. She is a goddess who dwells there in the sweet-smelling grove of flowers. Had I known of the existence of this

goddess[4] there, I would not have come.

'In the open yard before fishermen's huts where their nets are dried, Death,[5] assuming the form of a maiden with

1

One of the pastimes of the girls in the littoral tracts.

2 This stanza suggests that this is the only medicine for curing lovesickness. These words are spoken by the lover's com- panion who sees signs of love in the heroine, Cf. infra st. 45.

3 This and the following stanza go by the name of kāṉal - vari.

4 The goddess is the lady-love herself.

5 For a description of Death in a maiden's guise, see Tiruk-kuṟaḷ, st. 1083, and Kaḷittokai, st. 56, l. 9.

long lance-like eyes, dwells on the foreshore where the waves beat the sands. There, with a wreath of flowers in her hand, she guards the fish dried for sale. Had I known that she was here, I would not have come at all.' (So said the lover.)

Again[1]

'Behold! This is the moon, this perfected picture of the face in which eyes have been painted like fish, brows like a bow and curls of hair like clouds in which Cupid's power is revealed. O tell me, has the moon left the wide sky in fear of the serpent (Rāhu)[2] and sought shelter in this little hamlet where fishermen dwell?

'Behold! Her eyes resembling a blood-stained lance[3] glance from side to side, to view the conch-shells cast on the shore. They are fierce Death. Has fierce Death assumed the form of a graceful young damsel, and come to live in this little village on the

seashore?

'Behold! This is the goddess who drives away birds from where the fish are spread to dry and who causes dire sickness to those who gaze at her. Has that goddess come to the cool seaside thick with hare-leaf (*aṭumpu*) in the form of a damsel with five plaits of hair?'[4]

1 Stanzas 11-13 are put in the mouth of the lover who, on seeing his lady-love in front of him, rapturously breaks forth into description of her.

2 Rāhu is an evil planet like Kētu. Legend has it that Rāhu has only a head, while Kētu has only a body and possesses no face. Both are supposed to cause eclipses according to the mythical account transmitted by the Purāṇas.

3 Red in the eyes of ladies is a sign of their youthful love. Hence the eye is compared to a blood-stained lance. The eye here stands for the person possessing such eyes.

4 Another reference to the hair being dressed in five plaits.

Again[1]

'The fragrant flowers of this grove, the fresh *sweet* smell of these spreading sands, the faultless words of this damsel, her big youthful breasts, her face resembling the full moon, her bow-like curved brows, and her lightning waist that baffles the painter's brush;[2] it is these that have caused distress to me.

'This open seashore with its dashing billows, this stretch
of shining sand, these flowers that send forth their sweet
scents, this pleasant thick grove the fragrance-spreading
tresses, this face like the moon, and this pair of carp-like
eyes; all these have caused distress to me.

'This beach where shells are scattered in heaps, this
fine grove which charges the air with its fragrance, these
flowers that scatter their soft petals, these

haunts where
she moves about alone, her young teeth which look like
new-sprouting shoots (from the soil), her face that vies
with the full moon, and her two youthful breasts; it is
these that have caused distress to me.'

Again[3]

'Your elder brothers go
out into the sea and live
by killing living things (fish); you, on the other hand,
enter into my body and live by killing me. Pray do
not lose your slender waist which is in danger of being

1 Stanzas 14-16 are put into the mouth of the hero as addressing his comrade.

2 Another reference to show that the art of painting had been developed to a large extent in *the second century* A.D.

3 Stanzas 17-19 are the words of the hero addressing the heroine.

overwhelmed by the weight of your beauteous and well-moulded breasts.[1]

'Your father kills the living things (of the sea by catching them) in the cruel meshes of his net.[2] You, on the other hand, kill lives by catching them in the net of your long eyes. Pray do not lose your lightning-like waist, which is at the point of breaking, owing to the weight of your breasts decked with pearl-strings.

'By means of swift boats, your elder brothers kill lives (fish). You kill lives with

your curved brows. Your fame consists in witnessing the distress you cause in others. Pray do not lose your slender waist which faints under the weight of your breasts!'[3]

Again[4]

'The red eyes of the damsel who holds the coral pestle in her hand and pounds the white pearls in the mortar,[5] the red eyes of her who pounds white pearls are not lilies, for, O, they are so cruel!

'The red eyes of the damsel who walks the walk of a swan in the shade of the *puṉṉai* where the waves dash

1 The term miṭal in the text means literally 'strength.'
'of abounding

2 The eyes and the waist of the lady are compared respectively to the meshes of a net and to lightning.

3 In these three stanzas 17-19 the hero makes

a passionate appeal to the heroine to yield and to subject him to no more uncertainty

4 Stanzas 20-23 are put into the mouth of the hero's com- panion when he hears his words of passion.

5 See below, canto xxix, 'Vaḷḷaippāṭṭu', l. 6. The coral pestle and the pearl powders seem to confirm that the city was noted for abundant pearls and coral.

against the foul-smelling shore, the red eyes of her who walks the walk of a swan are frightful; verily they are death, death!

'The red eyes of the damsel who holds honey-laden violet in her hand and scares away the birds that hover

around the dried fish, the red eyes of her who scares away
the birds are not innocent darts; verily they are so cruel,
cruel!'

Again

'O foolish swan! Do not go near her, do not go; your
gait cannot rival hers. O foolish swan! do not go near
her, do not go; your gait cannot rival hers. O foolish
swan! do not approach her, who roams about stirring the
waters of the sea as the waves fall one after another (on
the shore), for your gait cannot rival hers. Do not go.'

The Narrative

At that time, Mātavi of the long beautiful

eyes, who listened to the sea-song (of Kōvalaṉ), feeling that his song was indicative of a change of attitude on his part, took the lute from him pretending that she was pleased though (really) sulking. Then she began to play, purposefully, an ode to the sea so fine that the goddess Earth[1] wondered at her skill; and all people were in ecstasy when they heard her sweet voice appropriately accompanying the notes of the lute.

TO THE KĀVERI[2]

'Hail to thee, Kāveri! clothing thyself in a garb of fair flowers where bees cluster murmuring their songs, thou

1 A relic of the primitive concept of calling the Earth Mother and Goddess.

2. Stanzas 25-27 go by the name of āṟṟuvari or a kind of ancient song to the river. Here the righteous rule of the Cola

walkedst along with swaying steps, with carp-like dark eyes. All this walk of thine, with thy carp-like dark eyes, is, I know, due to thy husband's righteous sceptre which does not deviate from the right path.[1] Hail to thee, Kāvēri!

'Hail to thee, Kāvēri! When thou movedst along and thy lovely garland swayed, the peacock strutted along the flowery grove, and the koel sent forth its mirthful notes; I have learnt that this walk, with thy lovely gar- land moving, is attributable to the might of thy husband's frightful lance. Hail to thee, Kāvēri!

'As a mother tends her babe so thou

wilt not cease from everlasting help to the fertile country of him (our king) who is prosperous to the end of all time. This enduring help which thou renderest unceasingly is attributable to the grace of our king of the solar race, who, with his wheel of righteousness, confers protection on all.[1] Hail to thee, Kāvēri!'

TO PUKĀR

'O sir, you come every day, like the God of love,[2] and
ask us to receive pearls, which are no match for the bright

king and the fertility of his kingdom are in evidence, the latter mostly due to the Kāvēri. Thus we find that the glorification of the Kāvēri is an important theme in all early Tamil poetry in general and of the Silappatikāram in particular.

1 These are the primary duties of a righteous monarch. The Sanskrit term pālanam or paripālanam

connotes the idea that pro- tection of subjects is the chief duty of a king. See, for example, Rāmāyaṇa, Bk. II, ch. 106, st. 19.

2
This may also refer to the impartiality of the king.

3 The theme of stanzas 28-30 is the glory of Pukār, the quondam capital of the Cōḷas.

C—14

teeth shining between the coral lips of our lady whose face
is like the full moon.
Our city is Pukār where the surg-
ing ocean, like a dealer, exchanges lustrous pearls for
wreaths of flowers.

'Sir, these bracelets of the fair-armed ladies, the
damsels of sturdy fishermen, make known

(by becoming
loose)[1] that they have been married in secret.[2] We are
innocent. How can we understand all this? Our city is
Pukār where the water-lily, with the murmuring bee in-
side, blossoms at the sight of the swan resting in the midst
of the flower–laden branches of the long *puṉṉai*, imagining
them to be the full moon and stars.

'How can we know,
sir, in these regions where wine
overcomes the consumer while the consumption cannot be
concealed, the fact that you cause sickness, incurable by
any medicine, to ladies? Our city is Pukār where, when
the waves destroy the houses of sand, sharp javelin-like

eyes[3] in their full-moon faces shed tears of sorrow. Then gathering handfuls of sand we throw them against the waves imagining that the sea will be filled up.

Again

'Although he saw[4] the male crab with the female crab and saw me also in this fair park thick with its clusters of

1 See in this connexion Kalittokai, 'Kuriñci,' st. 17, ll. 8-11.

2 It is a reference to the kaḷavu system of marriage. The term marai in the text is significant.

3 The idea here is that waves rise like sharp javelins as if to meet the moon in the sky and dash against the sporting-ground of these fisher-maids. Thinking foolishly that they could arrest the progress of the fill up the sea.

waters, they throw sand into the deep as if to

4. Stanza 31

describes the feelings of the heroine and shows her inability to gauge the love of her lord.

flowers, the lord of the maritime tract, taking leave of his senses, deserted us of the five plaits. O girl with curly hair, I do not know his reason.

'Has[1] he taken with him his sympathy and his horse- chariot, and gone without thinking of us? O fair-blossom- ed hare–leaf creepers! O swans! Let him abandon us. Yet shall we not forget him who has forgotten us.

'O *neytal* flower laden with honey like my weeping eyes at the distressing nightfall, thou feelest no trouble but dost sleep. In thy dreams

dost thou see my hard-hearted (lover) as he approaches this seaside?

'When he dashed along with the speed of birds in his chariot drawn by horses, thou ruinedst the route wherever he went (his path), O clear waters of the sea. What can I do, O clear waters of the sea? Thou hast become at one with those who are spreading scandal around me here. What shall I do? Thou dost not know my woes.

'O waves! The ruts caused by the passing of the strong; big chariot of my perfect lover were ruined. O cool grove! O swan, sporting with thy mate! O wet shore! Will not you all tell my lover that (his deed) is not just?

'Bless you, O waves! You destroyed the by the wheels of my perfect lover's strong,

ruts caused

big chariot.
You destroyed the ruts on the way. At the same time you pretended to be a friend of mine. Hail, you waves! You are no friend.'

1 Stanzas 32-36 represent the lament of the heroine at the neglect and indifference of her lover. She aimlessly addresses the thare-leaf, the neytal flower, the waves, the grove, and the swan.

Again[1]

'O lord of the sea, whose waves dash as far as the paddy fields, enrobed in beautiful corals and decked with excellent ornaments made of well-formed pearls! The fresh wounds caused in the *punnai* park by the shafts of Cupid, who owns the flag of the *makara* fish, cover her body and make her unrecognizable; but if her mother sees her thus, what shall I do?

'O lord of the maritime tract, whose waves, smiling with their pearl-like teeth and opening their coral lips, spread over the courtyard where the fishermen's nets are (left for drying), what shall I do if her mother, seeing that this innocent damsel has changed her colour to that of the *pīra* flower that blossoms during winter, consults the deity[2] and finds out who did this cruel act?

'O lord of the maritime tract, whose waves move
about to destroy the fishy smell of the beach and penetrate
the cool grove spreading it with the fragrance of different
fallen flowers,[3] my lady suffers mental anguish but the
cause of her illness is not known.
If this unknown disease
is detected by her mother who will be pained at it, what
shall I do?'

1 Stanzas 37-39 have for their theme the varaivu-kaṭaviy-avai. These are the words of the maid who is afraid of the discovery of signs of love in her mistress by the latter's mother.

Anxious to see her wedded the maid thus addresses the lover.

2 This points to the custom of consulting deities to rectify wrongs when ever trouble occurs.

3 The reference is to old and withered flowers that have fallen down from the tree.

Again[1]

'The evening darkness has spread everywhere. The Day-maker (the sun) has disappeared. My eyes shed tears of sorrow from which it is impossible to recover. O fair one whose locks of hair are decked with open-petalled flowers! Is this maddening, fiery

twilight, which loosens my bangles,[2] found in the country of the deserter?

'The sun has disappeared. Thick darkness has spread everywhere.' Collyrium-eyes, that look like opening flowers, shed tears of sorrow. O fair one whose face looks like the young moon! Is this maddening twilight, which comes vomiting the moon and devouring the sun,[3] found in that country to which he has gone?

'The birds have stopped singing. The Lord of the Day has disappeared. These long eyes suffer from the pain of shedding unceasing tears. O fair one whose tresses contain blossoming flower-buds! Is this madden- ing twilight which attacks my life,[4] found in the country of the deserter?'

Again[5]

'Someone came to the *kaitai* fence through the swamps (near the sea) and spoiled our sport. He who

went away

1 Stanzas 40-42 represent the distress of the heroine at eventide when she thinks of the country in which her lover has tarried. She addresses her maid.

2 The idea is that maidens feel the separation of their lovers

keenly when night sets in, so that their bodies grow thin and their bangles hang loose.

3 The idea is that the sun has set and the moon has risen.

4 The heroine considers evening her cruel enemy.

5 Stanzas 43-45 are again the words of the maid to her lady. In Tamil love poetry the maid sometimes identifies herself so

spoiling our sport, would not leave my love-stricken mind.

'Through the swamps, fenced by the

the sea, someone came and stood before us

park, close to
saying "Make
me pleased". He who stood before us saying "Make me pleased" could not be excluded from our deer-like glances.

'Seeing the swan playing with its mate, one stood looking on all yesterday. He, who stood looking on
yesterday, would not leave (our minds) even as the gold-tinted moles[1] cannot leave our body.'

Also[2]

'Come not here, O crane! Come not near our park. Come not here, O crane, come not near our park; for you
will not speak of my present love-sickness to my lord of the maritime tract. Come not, O crane! Do not approach
our park.'

Also

Singing thus in the mode in which Kōvalaṉ had sung,

the beautiful damsel (Mātavi) again exhibited with her rosy little fingers the charm of the

cevvaḻippālai[3] in which

closely with the heroine that she speaks for the heroine. Here is an open declaration of her abiding faith in the lover who has deserted her, as she thinks, for the time being only. Alternatively these stanzas may be interpreted in another way. The first two lines of each of these three stanzas can be taken as the words of the maid and the next two lines as the words of the heroine in reply.

1 'Yellow spreading spots on the body of women, regarded as beautiful'—Tamil Lexicon.

2 This address to the crane in stanza 45 represents the lament of the lovesick heroine.

3 'A secondary melody-type of the pālai class'—Tamil Lexicon.

the *kaikkilai*[1] was joined with *kural*. She sang in suitable strains a new melody-type (*paṇ*).

Again[2]

'O evening, during that charming *vilarippālai*[3] peculiar to the residents of the maritime tract, you made *iḷi*[4] blended with *kiḷai* (*kaikkiḷai*). O evening, even as you made *iḷi* join with *kiḷai*, you are able to take away my life. Please yourself. May you live long!

'O evening, you go to take away the life of people who live dolefully seeking solace in the greatly comforting parting-words of their separated lovers. If you thus besiege

them, O evening, you will be the invading king from outside besieging the fortress of the enemy-king[5]. Is it not so?

'O maddening twilight, you came with the setting of the Lord of the Day, augmenting my distress, when the world began to close its eyes. If you are the maddening twilight, and if he be my wedded lord, the world has

1 'Poem in five viruttam verses of unreciprocated love'—ibid. This song shows that her love is one-sided and not reciprocated by the other party.

2 The three stanzas 48-50 represent the passionate outburst of the heroine at the approach of the evening. Cf. stanzas 40-2 supra.

3 Vilari is a descending musical scale.

4 Iḻi is the pañcamasvaram and the sixth kaikkiḷai is its inimical string. Instead of playing on the iḻi string the fingers automatically went to the enemy-string at that time, due to illusion of the mind.

5 The reference is to the uḻiñaitiṇai and the noccittiṇai, and represents the monarch outside forcing an entry into the fortress and the defending king inside.

(See Tolk. 'Poruḷ.', sūtra 65.)

become impoverished indeed.[1] Bless thee, maddening twilight!'

Again[2]

'O god of the sea, we worship your lotus-feet. At this cruel maddening, fiery twilight, our lover departed, without considering the effects of his vow made in this flowery park, with words removing all our mental pain. Please forgive his false vow.'

Hearing this, Kōvalan said, 'I sang the *kāṉalvarī*; but she, the cunning one combining several deceitful lies, sang with her mind upon someone else.' Prompted by Fate which made the music of the lute its pretext,[1] he slowly withdrew his hands from the embrace of his full-moon-faced lady-love, and said 'Since the day has come to a close, we shall make a move'. But she did not get up at once. After Kōvalan had gone away with his retinue of servants, Mātavi rose up, and silencing the group of maids who were making a noise in the grove filled with the pollen of flowers, she betook herself home, getting into her carriage, with a sad heart, unaccompanied by her lover, and saying,

1 She believes that everybody in the world must feel alike

at nightfall.

2 The lover has been separated for a long time. Knowing secretly that he had returned and was waiting for an opportunity to meet the heroine, the maid addresses the god of the sea so as to be heard by the lover.

3 Here the author introduces the theory of *prarabdhakarma*, that the effects of our actions in a previous birth have to run their course, do what we will.

'May the garlanded white parasol of Cembiyaṉ (Cōḷa king), who with his fiery sword and his elephant with an ornamental plate on its face makes all the princes of this vast world bow their heads, bring entire Cakravāḷa[1] mountain!'

under its shadow the

1 A mythical range of mountains encircling the orb of the earth.

CANTO VIII

VENIR KATAI

OR

THE ADVENT OF SUMMER

THE celebrated king Māraṉ (Cupid) with his delightful friend Spring held sway over the fertile Tamil country, bounded in the north by the Tirupati hills[1] sacred to Vishṇu, and in the south by the Kumari sea,[2] having for its capitals high-towered Madura, Uṟantai[3] of great renown, awe-inspiring Vañci, and Pukār with its resounding waters. This approach of (Spring) was heralded by the ambassador, the South Wind, hailing from the fertile Potiyil hill sacred to the revered saint (Agastya). As if to announce the herald's message, 'Put on your garb, O ye regiments of the fish-bannered prince, befitting your respective ranks,' the cuckoo, living in a grove rich in creepers, acted as the young trumpeter of Cupid's army[4] and sounded his note.

1 The northern and southern limits of the Tamil country are furnished here. Once there was a river by name the Kumari, near the place which is now known as Cape Comorin. It has been swallowed by the sea. That the sea eroded into the interior as far as the river Pahṛuḷi is evident from this canto, ll. 18-20 and corroborated by the Iṛaiyaṉār Akapporuḷ.

2 The Kumari sea is compared to a young lady decked with bangles. It is to be noted here that the two-capitals of the Cōlas are mentioned.

3 The Cōla Perunaṛkiḷḷi was the king at this time at Uṟantai.

Pukār was only the quondam capital.

4 Māraṉ, the God of Love, had for his fourfold army the four capitals of the Tamil land, for his ally the Spring, for his

Mātavi of the long flower-like eyes who had returned alone, after her love–quarrel with Kōvalaṉ at the pleasure-park filled with open buds on the seashore, betook herself to her summer-retreat in a lofty upper story reaching the sky. That beautifully

adorned damsel decorated the expanse of her breasts which were already smeared with *kunkumum,* with pearls of the southern sea and sandal- paste of the southern hills. These were the unexceptional tributes appropriate to the season[1] which she offered with her own hands.

Taking the spotless lute in her grasp she began to sing a sweet song and fell into a languor which she overcame by assuming the *padmāsanam* posture in the nine series of postures (*viruttis*).[2]

With her right hand on the bend of the *vīṇa* in the attitude of the *patāhai* and with her left hand in that part of the instrument known as the *māṭakam,* she produced by the skill of her technique the notes *cempakai, ārppu, kūṭam,* and *atirvu,* avoiding discords.[3] She thus played the series of fourteen tunes in the traditional mode, beginning with *uḷai* and ending with *kaikkiḷai* carefully scruti- nizing the

respective notes of the strings known as *iṇai,*[4]

ambassador the South Wind and as his royal herald, blowing the trumpet, the koel or cuckoo.

1 This shows that different kinds of fragrant pastes were used by lovers according to the season.

2 Virutti is also known by another term, iruppu, explained by Aṭiyārkkunallār from dramatic and other treatises. See Perumkatai, 'Narumatai', ll. 44-8.

3 Cf. Cīvakacintāmaṇi st. 716-9, comm.

4 The second string.

ciḷai,[1] *pakai*[2] and *naṭpu.*[3]
In this way she sang with udgement to the accompaniment of the *iḷi* string.

Later, in the same order, she sounded the fifth and the seventh strings beginning and ending with *uḻai,* and after- wards commencing and ending with *kural.* She tested her skill in the four modes of *akanilai-marutam,*[4] *puṟanilai-marutam,* *marukiyal-marutam,* and

perukiyal-marutam,[5] keeping an eye upon the three *srutis* high, level and low and then began the *tirappan* born of the above-mentioned tunes. Soon she who looked like a flower-creeper was overcome by languor when she set her mind to play the tune called *vēnirpāṇi*.

She took up a garland formed by tying together *campaka, mādavi, tamāla*, white jasmine, fragrant roots, and choice petals of the red lily intertwined with the white bent flowers of the ripe screw pine. On this she wrote, under the influence of Cupid who, single-handed, exercises his righteous sceptre over the vast world with his flowerarrows, and who is worshipped by the whole earth unexcepted, taking in her hand the long stalk of a flower and dipping it in the writing paste made of red lac and *agar*,[6] as follows:—

1 The fifth string.

2 The sixth and the third strings.

3 The fourth string.

4 This and the following two are supposed to have sixteen strings.

5 This has thirty-two strings.

The above are the four great classes of pan which is a melody-tape.

6 It is interesting to note the nature of the writing materials used for love letters.

'He who has come to rule the world is the youthful prince,[1] Spring, who brings together the lovers and their chosen ones. The moon who has risen with the love-anguish that shows itself in the evening, also is not faultless. Therefore whether they be lovers who had had union and departed and were delayed in coming back, or whether

they be lovers who had deserted and forgotten their mates,

that this moon should kill the lonely poor ones with his

sharp darts of fragrant flowers should be no cause for

surprise. Please understand this.'

Thus evidencing her excessive love wrote Māṭavi,

sallow-complexioned and well acquainted with the sixty-

four arts[2] when her sweet tongue expressed in musical *paṇ*

and *tiṟam*, the tender tone of a lisping child. She then

called aloud her maid Vasantamālā, on that pensive even-

ing, and asked her to inform Kōvalaṉ of all that had been

written on the flower-garland and to bring him to her.

Receiving the garland, Vasantamālā of the lance-like long

eyes went to Kōvalaṉ living in the quarter where grain

was stored, and handed it over to him.

Then

Kōvalaṉ refused to receive the message saying:

"The *kaṉkūṭuvari*[3]
performed by the loving maiden

having *tilaka* on her forehead, curls of hair adorned with

flowers, small black eyebrows, *kuvaḷai*-like eyes casting

love glances, *kumiḻ*-like nose, *kovvai*-like lips,

1 The implication is that Spring being a youthful prince

cannot rule fairly and well.

2 Cf. Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra where the names of the sixty-

four arts are given.

3 One of the eight vari; a kind of dancing or, more appro- priately, gesture. It seems to have been a custom in ancient times for the dancing-girls to take to *vari* as distinguished from the *kuravai* in which housewives took the leading part. This literally

'The *kāṉvari*[1] dance of the black long-eyed dancer, who moved backward and forward by coming and going, with a moon-like face which seemed to groan under the weight of rain-bearing clouds of hair, whose eyes frisked about

like carps, and whose bewitching smile exposed pearl-white

teeth from within her coral-coloured sweet lips,

'The dance of Disguise (*uḷvari*[2]), performed by the dancer whose piercing eyes were as sharp as a spear and who noticed the poverty of my heart after my separation from her owing to a lover's quarrel, and being lonely appeared at the approach of eventide in the guise of her maid cheered me up with words as sweet as those of the parrot, with steps as entrancing as those of a swan, and with grace as ravishing as that of the peacock,

'The minor dance *puṟavari*[3] which, drunk with passion,

she, whose slender waist could bear no ornaments,

danced, in front (of the house) to the tinkling of foot-orna-

ments and jingling waist-band (not embracing me) though

she knew that I was pining for her,

'The dance of *kiḻarvari*[4] performed by her who had a

beautiful forehead, garlanded locks of hair, forelocks adorn-

ed with petals, a string of pearls, and beauteous breasts

means the first view of the heroine by the hero. See Tamil Lexicon, p. 184.

1 Dance performed at frequent and repeated intervals.

2 This was to disguise one's own form. An example of living incognito is that of the Pāṇṭavas in the city of Virāṭa king.

3 Dance where the heroine coldly neglects her lover's company.

4 'Posture assumed by an offended lover or love, when an intermediary tries to conciliate'—Tamil Lexicon, p. 938.

causing distress to her waist and who appeared languid with her sleek tresses devoid of all sheen after purposely misconstruing the message I sent to her through her maid- servant expressing my love for her,

'The *tērccivari*[1] performed by her when reflecting and reflecting on her sufferings caused by my separation and by her unbearable love towards me, she expressed to my numerous relatives,

'The *kāṭcivari*[2] which she performed when she wore the garland with bees buzzing on it and spoke about her distress to all onlookers,

'And the *eṭuttukkōḷvari*[3] which she danced one follow- ing the other, seeing which, those upon whom she fell in a swoon comforted her after bringing her to her senses,

'All these dances, my dear girl bedecked with jewels, are quite natural to her because she is

only a dancing-girl.'

Thus when he refused to accept the garland sent by
the bejewelled Mātavi, with the message written on the
white *tāḻai* flowers of the screw-pine, Vasantamālā was
sorrow-stricken at heart and wasted no time in returning to
tell her mistress adorned with a flower garland, what had
happened. Māṭavi of the long flower-like eyes, said in
reply: 'Fair lady, if he does not come this night, we will
see him at least tomorrow morning' and sat down with a
heavy heart on the couch spread with flowers, sleepless.

1 'A dramatic action in which a person expresses in detail
all his sufferings to his relatives'—Tamil Lexicon,

p. 2060.

2 'Dance exhibiting sorrow and distress'—ibid., p. 848.

3 'Theatrical action of swooning in extreme anguish in
order to be lifted up'—ibid., p. 515.

VEṆPĀ

When[1] the Spring came and the red lotus
petals, the tender leaves of the sweet mango

opened its
tree hung

down, and the beautiful *asōka* blossomed. O, what mental suffering has to be endured by our lady of the good spear-like eyes!

When the cuckoo proclaimed 'O ye that quarrelled with your lovers,[2] it is the command of Cupid that you must love one another' (Vasantamālā remembered what she had said to Kōvalan). 'O you who enjoyed her sweet words in the seaside park, enjoy now these sweet words written on tender flowers by her who has been embraced by the Spring.'

1 Soliloquy of the hunch-backed Vasantamālā in taking the ōla (message) from her mistress.

2 This is what is known as ūṭaļ. See Kaļittokai, st. 92, l. 61. It was a kind of 'love quarrel between the husband and wife, arising from jealousy, peculiar to the agricultural tracts, one of five *uripporuḷ*'.

CANTO IX

KANATTIRAMURAITTA KATAI

OR

THE TALE OF THE DREAM

In the evening when the sun disappeared, ladies with
creeper-like waists sprinkled[1] lustrous buds of *mullai*
flowers, just blossoming, and paddy grains in their houses
in the big city; they lit their jewelled lamps and attired
themselves in a manner appropriate to the night.[2]

One day long ago, Mālati fed her co-wife's child with
milk; but the milk choked the child who hiccoughed and
died. Being in a panic that her husband the Brahman and
her co-wife would throw the blame upon her

and would not accept the truth, Mālati took the dead child in her arms and went to the temple where stood the divine *kalpaka* tree (*amarartarukkōṭṭam*),[3] to the temple of the white elephant (*veḷyāṉaikkōṭṭam*)[4] to the temple of the beautiful white god (*veḷḷainākarkōṭṭam*),[5] to the temple of the Sun who rises in the east (*uccikkiḻāṉkōṭṭam*), to the temple of the city-god (*ūrkkōṭṭam*),[6] to the temple of the spear-god

1 Cf. Neṭunalvāṭai, ll. 39-44.

2 It appears that ladies had two kinds of dresses: one for the day and the other for the night.

3 Kalpaka was the divine tree in heaven, whose fragrance and flowers were enjoyed by Indrāṇi.

4 This is the Airāvata temple, the Airāvata being the mount of Indra, the king of heaven.

5 The temple of Balarāma.

6 The reference is to the god enshrined at Kailāsa, that is Siva.

(*vēṟkōṭṭam*),[1] to the temple of the Vajra (*vaccirakkōṭṭam*),[2] to the temple of the Deity who dwells outside the city (Aiyaṉār) (*puṟampaṇaiyāṉvāḻkōṭṭam*),[3] to the temple of the Nigranthas (*niggantakkōṭṭam*),[4] and to the temple of the Moon (*nilākkōṭṭam*)[5] and besought all these gods thus: 'O ye gods! Relieve me of my great trouble.' Then she betook herself to the temple[6] of the famous Śāttaṉ learned in the *sāstra* called *pāsaṇṭam* and besought his counsel.

At that time appeared before her one, a young creeper-like girl, as if mocking others by her beauty, who said, 'O

faultless woman! God will not grant a boon to those who

have not performed penance. This is not a false statement;

ment; it is a true saying: so hand to me this dead body.'

Saying that, she forcibly snatched the corpse from the (poor) woman's hands and went in the darkness, when all slept, to the ground *cuṭukāṭṭukkōṭṭam*[7] where the goblin

1 This is the temple of Muruka.

2 Either it was a temple where Vajra specially was wor-

shipped or it is a reference to Indra's shrine.
l. 27.
Cf. Maṇi., canto i,

3 Aṭiyārkkunallār identifies this with Sātavāhana's temple.

See Tolk. 'Sey.' sūtra 118, comm.
See also Divākaram, st. 12.

4 This was a Jaina temple.

5 Here is evidence of a separate temple

Moon-god.

dedicated to the

6 This and the above few lines show that as many as eleven temples were found in the city belonging to different cults. They also show that the worship of Indra, of the Moon, of the Sun, and of Balarāma, which has now become practically extinct, was extant in the early centuries of the Christian era. In those days, it is also seen that the people worshipped at all temples including that of the Jaina and the pāṣaṇḍa (heretic gods). This demonstrates that there was no sectarian outlook in matters religious.

7 The cuṭukāṭṭukkōṭṭam can be identified with cakravāḷakkōṭṭam mentioned in Maṇi., canto vi. Though it is difficult to fix

Iṭākiṉī who eats buried dead bodies, took the child's corpse and devoured it. Before her who cried out like a peacock at the visitation of thunder, appeared the God Śāttaṉ,[1] who comforted her with the following words: 'O

mother! Do not weep in your distress. Look before you and behold the living child.'

To fulfil the promise, the God himself assumed the form of that child and lay in the grove which was the haunt of cuckoos. The overjoyed Mālati took up this illusory child, clasped it to her bosom and (going home) handed it to its mother.

This divine Brahman child grew into a boy[2] and
acquired a profound knowledge of the sacred scriptures.
Later, when his parents died, he settled all disputes among
their relations, and performed all the religious obsequies
due to them.[3] Afterwards he married a lady named
Tēvanti and lived with her (for some time) saying 'May
your flower-like eyes bear this (divine) sight.'

(One day) he appeared to her in his eternal form of youth and then vanished asking her to go to his shrine.

After he had gone with those inspiring words, Tēvanti, who was worshipping at his temple every day, gave out as the date of the origin of the institution of cremation, it seems reasonable to suppose that it is as old as that of burial.

1 Sāttaṉ can be identified with Sāsta now enshrined in the Sāsta temples which are generally found on the outskirts of villages. See article 'Aśōka's Religion' in J.O.R., 1930, p. 278.

2 A brahmacārī.

3 The svadharma of a Brahman brahmacārī and householder which is furnished here agrees with what is prescribed in the

Dharmaśāstras and the Dharmasūtras. For the six duties incumbent on the householder see Hindu Administrative Institutions, pp. 188-9.

a pretext[1] (for his absence) 'He has left me saying that he will visit all the sacred places. Please bring him back to me.'

Having come to know that the good lady Kaṇṇaki of undiminished repute had cause for distress, and thinking of it with a sorrowful heart, Tēvanti worshipped the god for

her sake with (offerings of) *aṟuku*, (*Aerua lanata*) and
paddy, and went (to Kaṇṇaki), with the blessing 'May
you get back your husband.'

But Kaṇṇaki replied, 'Though I may get him back, my heart will still be pained; for I have had a dream.[2] It was thus. We went, hand in hand, to a great city. There some people belonging to the city said something which was unbearably unjust. Some crime was thrown upon Kōvalaṉ. It stung me like a scorpion-bite. Hearing it, I pleaded before the protecting king. The king as well as the city would witness a great calamity. I shall not say more because it was a bad dream. O lady with close-fitting bangles, if you listen to the evil deed done to me and the happy results[3] achieved by me and my husband, you will laugh (in derision).'

Tēvanti replied: 'O lady wearing golden

bangles! You have not been discarded by your husband. This trouble is due to your having failed to perform a vow in a former birth.

If you wish to wipe off that evil, go to the spot where the Kaveri meets the roaring sea. There is a park where the *neytal* opens its petals, and where two

1 To those who asked her why she was she used to answer thus.

staying at the shrine,

2 Note how the dream came true.

3 The evil deed is the plucking off of her breasts. The happy results are the attainment of heaven.

sacred tanks are dedicated to

the Moon (*Sōmakuṇḍam*)[1]
the Sun (*Sūryakuṇḍam*) and
respectively. Those women
who bathe in them and worship the God of love[2]
enshrined there, will ever enjoy the company
of their husbands in
this world.
būmi). We

Besides they will also attain Heaven (*Bōga-*
shall go there one day to bathe.'

But bejewelled Kaṇṇaki said in reply to
the charm-
ing lady, 'That is not proper'[3] and sometime
after this
a young maidservant approached her and
said, 'Our
Kōvalan̲ has arrived at the gate. It looks as
if he will
protect us for a long time.' Kōvalan̲ went into
the house and entering the
bedchamber was stricken with grief at

the sight of the pale Kaṇṇaki, his fair wife, and said, 'By consorting with a false woman who makes every false thing appear like truth, I have lost the rich store of my ancestral wealth. O, the poverty I have caused (to our house) makes me ashamed of myself.'

Comforting him with a fascinating smile on her brightening face, she replisd, 'O, do not grieve! You yet have my anklets. Accept them '[4] Then Kōvalaṉ retorted, 'O, my good girl, listen. I will use this anklet as my capital

1 In a note Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar seems to identify these with Sōmatīrtham and Sūryatīrtham in Tiruveṇkāṭu. The Paṭṭiṉappālai (Pattuppāṭṭu), l. 39, refers to these as irukāmattiṇaiyēri, the lakes which give one's desire.

2 The reference is to a temple of Manmatha or the God of Love. Though festivals in his honour have no separate temples to this deity. and cīvakacintāmaṇi, st. 1598.

are still conducted, we
Cf. Paṭṭiṉappālai, l. 39,

3 This is in keeping with the sentiment of the Kuraḷveṇpā, st. 55, where it is stated that chaste ladies offer worship to no God but their husbands.

4 Kaṇṇaki spoke thinking that Kōvalaṉ wanted to take some more ornaments to the dancing-girl Mātavi.

to recover all the jewels and all the wealth I have lost.[1] Rise up, O lady with the tresses decorated with choice flowers! Come with me to the city of Madura highly renowned for its tower.' Impelled by fate he decided to start before the heavy darkness of the night was dispelled by the Sun.

VEṆPĀ

The dream dreamt by his wife made the words of the black and long-eyed

Mātavi empty. Early, before the sun dispelled the darkness of night, (Kōvalan̲ and his wife) started, impelled by fate which had decreed long ago.

their doom

1 The author seems to infer from the life of Kōvalan̲ that the leading of an immoral life will result in the loss of all wealth and property.

Canto X

NATUKAN KATAI

OR

THE SIGHT OF THE KINGDOM

On the last day on which the last watch of the night was dark,[1] when the eye of the sky (the sun) had not opened, and when the white moon that shone in the company of the stars had vanished, Kōvalan̲ and (Kaṇṇaki) started forth driven by their fate.

Having passed out of their tall outer

gate with its very famous latched door[2] where the goat and the yak and the swan[3] with its soft down were roaming about in a sense of kinship, they circumambulated the temple sacred to Maṇivaṇṇaṉ (Vishṇu) sleeping his all-perceiving sleep[4] on his beautiful serpent-couch. Going beyond it they left

1 The Indra festival commenced on Saturdry, Citrāpaurṇami, and continued for 28 days ending with Monday (Star Anusam) of the month of Vaikāśi and resuiting in the ūṭal of Kōvalaṉ and Mātavi. The journey to Madura by Kōvalaṉ was begun the next Tuesday, when the star Kēṭṭai was in the ascendant. (See Aṭiyārkkunallār's commentary). This calculation is incorrect.

2
formed
it.
The idea here is that when the gate was made, the
an integral part of it. It means it was not separate

latch
from

3 It would appear from the commentary that these domesticated animals were also artistically carved on the gateway. If so it bears evidence that wood carving was practised in the ancient Tamil land.

4 Yōganidra of Vishṇu. This demonstrates that Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki offered prayers to the Vaishṇava deity. Later it is

behind them the seven *vihāras*[1] made by Indra, where

divinities moving in the sky explained treatises on *dharma*,

which were the divine words of the Aṟavōṉ (the Buddha),[2]

under the cool shade of the green *bōdi*[3] tree which had

five lofty branches.

They then worshipped, and went round the highly shining *silātala*,[4] jointly built by the Jaina

householders for the

benefit of the Caraṇar[5] who would assemble, on festive

days, such as the day of the first freshes (in the Kāvēri)

and of the car-festival, under the entrancingly cool shade

of the golden flowered *asōka* tree, standing on a high

platform where all the five termini sacred to the five great

yōgins converged.[6] There gathered the men of penance

who had abjured meat eating, and taken the vow, of speak-

ing the truth alone, and purified themselves of all sins,

understanding the true path by restraining their senses.[7]

said that they worshipped at the Jaina śilātala. This bears testi-

mony to the fact that there was little difference

between earlier Jainism and the orthodox religion.

1 See canto xxvii, l. 92 infra. The literal meaning of the term vihāra is 'not constructed either by hand or by machinery;' it is a mind-born institution. See Maṇi., canto xxvi, l. 55 and canto xxviii, l. 70.

2 See Maṇi., canto xxi, l. 48.

3 Mābōdi is a tree with five branches. Maṇi., canto xxx, l. 10. Bōdimūlam (mahābōdi) is the aśvattha tree under which Gautama Buddha saw the great light.

4 It was made of candrakānta or moonstone.

5 The Jaina Cāraṇar are under reference. They visited Pukār on certain festival days. The tree sacred to them was the aśōka.

6 These yōgis are commonly known as Pañcaparamēṣṭins. They are Arhat, Siddha, Ācārya, Upāḍhyāya and Sādhu.

7 The practice of the Sāvakas is referred to.

NATUKAN KATAI

They then passed beyond the entrance-gate (of the city), which looked like a long river with its source in a hill, and reached the outer wall which enclosed a lake and a grove (*ilavantikai*)[1] lined by beautiful trees thickly covered with several sorts of flowers, which were offered along with lovely Spring and the Hill-breeze as a tribute to the (Co̱ḻa) king by the bodiless God (Kāma).

Proceeding further still, they crossed the broad road ren- dered cool by the low branches of trees on either side which led to a bathing place on the *Kāvēri*, and going westwards they penetrated to the distance of a *kātam* into the flowery grove on the northern bank of the river cele- brated for its freshes, until they reached the residence of the saint Kavunti (*Kavuntippaḷḷi*) which was a grove of flowering trees. There the slender-waisted (Kaṇṇaki) felt fatigued. Her feet were sore (with walking). Breathing hard, she of the

fragrant tresses asked in a lisping voice, displaying her sharp-edged teeth, 'Which is the ancient city of Madura?' Kōvalan smiled a smile of hidden grief and said, 'Girl of the fragrant five-plaited hair, it is over thirty leagues[2] from our extensive city. It is very near.' Then he visited with his sweet-voiced wife the venerable Kavunti who lived there,[3] and both prostrated themselves before her.

1 Ilavantikai was the king's park in which was a lake. Cf. nirāḷimaṇṭapam used nowadays in connexion with temple festi- vals. See canto xxv, l. 4, infra; also Maṇi., canto iii, ll. 45-6.

2 The distance from Uṟaiyūr to Madura is 30 kātams. Feel- ing that Kaṇṇaki was already wearied, Kōvalan did not tell her outright that it was 30 kātams, but said it was six times five leagues so that she would not be alarmed at the long distance!

3 This is referred to as a portion of the Sri-kōil where he lived with the revered Kavunti. It may be noted that the two

forms Kāvunti and Kavunti occur in the text.

The saint looked at them and said 'You have attract- ive features, noble lineage and highly commendable con- duct. You appear to be faultlessly observing *dharma* as laid down in the sacred Jaina scriptures.[1] Why is it that you have left your home and come so far in great distress?'

Kōvalan replied: 'There is not much to say in reply to what you ask, O great saint! I am only eager to go to the ancient city of Madura to make a fortune.' The saint answered, 'If that is so, these tender feet (Kaṇṇaki's) cannot stand the sharp and rough gravel. This fair lady is not fit to go through the jungle. But who knows? Though the journey is not fit for you, you will not abandon it even if I ask you to do so.[2] Since I am very anxious to visit flawless Madura in the good Tamil country of the south, there

to worship Arivan by listening to the *dharma* preached by the sinless saints, who have, by their purity, got rid of all their *adharma*, I shall also go with you. Let us go!' Thereupon Kōvalan worshipped the venera- ble Kavunti with lifted palms and replied 'O saint, if you so favour us, I shall be relieved of my anxiety about this girl with shoulder-bangles.'

Kavunti continued:

'See, O Kōvalan! There are various kinds of troubles to be met in our way (to Madura).[3] Listen: If we decide to go through

shady places covered with cool flowers with

1 Kavunti was a Jain and so she speaks the dharma of that religion.
with a partiality to

2 The implication here is, 'Who knows store for you?'

what Fate has in

3 The forest-route is described as containing snares and pitfalls. The chief produce was jack-fruit; turmeric and ginger also grew there.

this tender lady who cannot endure the scorching sun, we may, perchance, encounter the dire distress which comes to people who do not avoid the deep and deceitful pits caused by the men who dug out the edible *vaḷḷi* roots grow- ing underground, and covered over with the faded flowers from the grove of *campaka* trees. If they cautiously avoid these fallen flowers and walk on, they will knock their heads against fully ripe jack-fruits. If then they go into the luxuriant gardens where the turmeric and ginger plants are grown, they will unwittingly tread upon the hard seeds of jack-fruits lying hidden.

'O loving husband of the lady with carp-like long eyes, if we decide to go along the fields,[1] this damsel will be frightened by the otters, who drive away the quarrelling carps in ponds fragrant with flowers, and seize in their mouths the long-backed *vāḷai* fish when they are leaping across the tank where the *malanku* live.[2]

'Again, the honey-filled hives canes, will have been dismantled

built (by bees) on sugar-
(by the wind) filling the
drinking-water of the tank encircled by sugar-canes with honey[3] and bees.
It is possible that our lady, in a fit of delusion will take the water in her joined palms and drink it (along with the bees) to quench her insufferable thirst.

'Again those who pluck out the weeds will have scat- tered the water-lily on the ridges in which multi-tinted beetles[4] will be lying in a

stupor after having drunk the

1 The second route through the agricultural tracts is sugges- ted. Here were cultivated fields interspersed by ponds.

2 A fish whose head resembled that of a snake.

3 The statement suggests that honey was food forbidden to Jains.

4 Here is the preaching of ahimsā or non-injury carried to its utmost limit.

honey of the flowers. As you walk along, your feet may unconsciously tread on them.

'If you decide to walk along the bunds of canals where waters splash you will tread upon multi-spotted crabs and snails, and cause unbearable pain to them.[1]

'There is no other route anywhere except through fields and groves. O friend with a tuft of curly hair!

Know these signs and avoid such dangers as you go along in the company of this fair lady.'

Thus saying, the venerable Kavunti took up her sacred begging-bowl and her netted bag suspended from her shoulders.[2] Holding a peacock's feathers in her hand and praying that the *pañcamantra*[3] might be their guide on the way, Kavunti, unrivalled in the practice of virute, accompanied the other two in their journey.

Though Saturn gets angry,[4] though the (fiery) comet[5] is visible, though Venus of the bright rays travels towards the

1 Further emphasis on observing the principle of ahimsā cardinal doctrine of the Jains, though it largely figures in the orthodox religion of the Hindus.

2 The begging-bowl (kaṭijñai), the uṟi, and peacocks' feathers are the outfit of the Jaina ascetic. See Nālatiyār, 'Ekai', 1.

9; Mani., canto vi, l. 93.

3 The pañcamantra; a, si. ā. u, sā. The Jains style this pañcanamaskāram. These symbols represent Arhat. Siddha, Acārya, Upādhyāya, and Sādhu, the first letters of the Pañcaparamēṣṭins. Its counterpart in orthodox religion is pañcākṣara, namaśivāya.

4 Evidence of the author's knowledge of astronomical science. Saturn grows angry when he lodges himself in Ṛṣabha, Mīna, and Simha.

5 The Dhūmakētu of Sanskrit literature.

the south (of the sky),[1] no harm is rendered to the Kāvēri which has its source in the wind-swept

heights of the Coorg hills where, to the accompaniment of raging thunder, the seasonal clouds pregnant with rain pour down their blessings the Kāvēri which dashes along with such diverse hill produce to meet the advancing tide of the wealth-bearing sea.[2] But finding her movement arrested by the barrier -- the anicut with its doorway—she noisily leaps beyond it in the sportive mood natural to her first freshes. No sound other than this can be heard. We can hear there neither the sound of the bucket,[3] not of the water-lift; neither the usually loud *pecottah*, nor the palm-leaf basket used in irrigation.

In the beautiful forest of lotuses appearing out of ponds
in regions surrounded by paddy-fields and sugar-cane
could be heard, just as in a battle-field[4] where two
monarchs fight, different kinds of sounds produced by the
water-fowl,[5] the loud-voiced crane, the red-footed swan,
the green-footed heron, wild fowl, the water crow (black
heron), fishes, creeping insects, birds and big herons.

Wallowing in the mire, in regions left unploughed,
black buffaloes would come out with their unwashed hair
and their red eyes, and rub their itching backs upon the

1 These signs are supposed to forebode evil by causing

drought.

2 Conch, coral, pearls, etc., are the products of the sea.

3 It is interesting to see here the different methods of irri-
gating fields. Cf. Kaut. Artha., Bk. II, chap. 'Sitādhyakṣa'. See
also Maturaikkāñci, ll. 89-93. Most of these methods still survive
n rural areas.

4
The confused noise of the battle-field is compared to the
different kinds of sounds made by a number of water-birds.

5 Here is a categorical list of water-birds.

straw granary when it gets loose and releases the grain
stocked within amidst the sheaves of paddy

whose rice-
corn hangs down like fly whisks[1] made of the fur of the
kavari yak. In those places brawny-armed labourers and
cultivators would assemble making a motley of sound.

There was also the sound of (rural) songs[2] sung to (new)
tunes by low-caste women in their drunken moods[3] while
they looked through their fish-like large eyes and uttered
indecent words standing in playful postures and, threw
mud upon each other, covering up their broad, bangled
shoulders and breasts with mud, having removed the
(faded) fragrant flowers from their hair and replaced them
with paddy-shoots.

There was also the sound of the benedictory songs
(*ērmaṅkalam*) sung reverently by ploughmen[4] standing by
their ploughshares and seeming to break open the ground
which then decorated with garlands made of paddy-stalks,
luxuriant *aṟuku*, and water-lilies.

There was also heard the *mukavai* song[5] sung (by the
field-labourers) when they drove cattle over the reaped
paddy sheaves to thresh the corn; and the cheering
applause[6] of those who heard the round-shaped-tabor

1 Fly whisks were generally made of the fur of the yak.

2 A description of typical rural life.

3 Low-caste women were addicted to drinking. They decked

themselves with paddy-shoots in their hair.

4 This refers to the simplicity and sincerity of the ploughmen at their work and points to the dignity of field labour. They knew the advantages of deep ploughing.

5 A kind of song sung by field-labourers on floor of paddy fields. Cf. Puṟam., st. 371.

the threshing-

6 This is what is called kaḷavaḷivaḷttu According to the Tolkappiyam it is erkkaḷavaḷi (the song of the plough) differen t

smeared with mud played by proud minstrels who used to
produce clear music by their *kiṇai.*[1]

Having heard these sounds in regular succession along
the banks of the great rivers, the travellers grew glad in
their hearts and did not feel the fatigue of the journey.

As they passed along, with success due to the prowess of
the reigning Cōḷa who owned the chariot with the tiger-
flag, they saw everywhere the sacrificial smoke, raised by
Brahmans in the *agnisāla* of their tall houses[2] which
closely resembled fog-covered hills, capable of impregna-
ting even the rain-bearing clouds.[3]

Going further, they saw ancient and prosperous vil-
lages of cultivators,[4] the sons of Dame Kāvēri and her
expansive waters, who were responsible for the support of
the needy and their dependants, and for the victory of the
monarch.[5] They also saw rustic parts interspersed by
villages where the rising fumes of the ovens,

in which the
sugar-cane[6] juice was being boiled, spread far and wide
from pōrkkaḷavaḷi (a warsong). Cf. Puṟa., paṭalam', st. 32.

Veṇpāmālai, 'Vākaip-

1 One of the many rural amusements. They were minstrels who sang the praises of Veḷāḷas to the accompaniment of the kiṇai drum.

2 A description of the Brahman residences.

3 Conclusive proof of the fire rite being practised on an extensive scale by Brahmans in the early Christian era in the Tamil land. It implies the acceptance of the theory that sacrifices cause rain, which finds a parallel in the Bhagavat is said 'Yajñad bhavati Parjanyah.'

Gitā (ch. v), where it

4 Different types of villages were encountered.

5 The author realized that agriculture is the king and kingdom. mainstay of the

6 The manufacture of sugar and jaggery from sugar-cane was a common industry in the rural parts of ancient Tamil India,

over heaps of stored corn which appeared like dark clouds resting on mountains. They did not travel more than one *kātam* each day.

After several days' journey, they reached Srīrangam,[1] where the river (the Kāvēri) was hidden by the city. Nearby was the habitation of the Dēvas—a spot filled with the fragrance of different independent flowers in the

middle of groves of trees fenced by the bent bamboo.

There appeared one Cāraṇa[2] who was well known for his great skill in expounding the rules of *dharma*, given to the world by the pre-eminent Perumakaṉ,[3] and who was returning from the glittering bright *silātala* of the *puṭṭiṉappākkam* of Pukār which had been jointly erected by the high-minded householders (*aiyar*)[4] and where he was in the habit of sitting.

Kavunti who had recognized the approach of this Cāraṇa, fell prostrate with her companions at his feet saying: 'May all our past sins perish.' Though the Cāraṇa who had a knowledge of the past, present and future[5] knew the reason for their coming there, he did not feel

1 Srirangam, now two miles from the town of Tiruchirapalli.

2 In a note Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar identifies these Cāraṇar with

Samaṇa sages of whom there were eight classes. See Cūṭā- maṇi, p. 36.

3 Perumakaṉ is an epithet for Arhat in the context. The threefold *eminence is related* to three adiśayams which are natural, karmaic and providential.

4 The term aiyar used here is significant. It seems to be used in connexion with people who evoked regard from the masses. *Undoubtedly it comes from* the term ārya, which has in our opinion no ethnic connotation as scholars would make us believe.

5 Avatijñānam

according to Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar.

afflicted being a hero who had completely put aside attach-

ment and anger.

He then spoke as follows: 'O Kavunti

of great and abundant distinction! You know how inexorable are the laws of destiny.[1] They do not cease (from action) even if ordered to cease. Nor can its wholesome effect be wiped away. They are like the sprouts shooting forth from sown seeds. Like the lighted lamp that is extinguished in an open plain when the high winds blow, is life in a body.

'The All-Knowing, the incarnation of *dharma*, He who has transcended all limits of understanding, the great Friend, the great Victor (Jinēndra),[2] the Accomplisher,[3] the Great Person (Bhagavan), the foundation of all

dharma, the Lord, the All-Righteous, the, Inner Essence

(of the Āgama), the Pure, the Ancient-One, the All-

Wise. the Vanquisher of Wrath, the Dēva, the Blissful

Lord,[4] the Supreme Being, the Possessor of all virtues,

the Light that illumines the world above, the great Truth,

the All-Humble, the great Caraṇa,[5] the Root Cause of

all, the *yōgin*,[6] the great One, the great Illumination, the

Dweller in everything,[7] the great Guru, the Embodiment

1 Cf. Nālaṭiyār—the whole of 'Pal̲avin̲ai', esp. st, 4.

2 They are jñāṉāvāraṇīyam, dariśanāvāranīyam, vēdanīyam,

mōhanīyam, āyūṣyam, nāmam, gōtram, and antarāyam. See

Aṭiyārkkunallār's gloss.

3 Also Kṛtakṛtya (Sans.) The term in the text is sidda.

4 The one who gives liberation to all. It should be noted

that the term mōkṣa is given as śivagati, literally the attainment

of the Saiva world.

5 He who could move about at his will.

6 The master of the eight mystic powers.

7 Cf. Maṇi., canto v, l. 71.

of Nature, Our great God, the
fame, the great King of virtues,[1]
One of undiminishing
the All-Prosperous,[2] the

great God,[3] the Self-born,[4] the four-faced,[5] the Bestower of the *angas*,[6] the *Arhat*, the peace-bestowing Saint, the One God, the Possessor of eight qualities,[7] the indivisible old Substance, the Dweller in the Heaven, the foremost of the Vēdas,[8] and the shining Light that dispels ignorance. None can escape the prison[9] of this body unless he obtains the illumination of the revealed Vēda proclaimed by Him who has the various (above-mentioned) names.'

Hearing these truthful words of the Cāraṇa, Kavunti, pre-eminent in penance, joined her hands on her head, and said: 'My ears will not open themselves to hear anything other than the words of wisdom revealed by Him who vanquished the Three (Desire, Anger and Delusion). My tongue will not say anything other than the 1008 names[10]

1 Also the possessor of all virtues.

2 Sankara.

3 Iśa.

4 Svāyambhuva.

5 Caturmukha.

6 It may be the anga portion of the Vēdic texts. to the Jains it is anga-āgama.

As applied

7 These are anantajñānam, anantadarśanam, anantavīryam, anantasukham, nirnāmam, nirgōtram, nirāyuṣyam and aḻiyāvi yalpu. See Arumpatavuraiyāśiriyar. For the term eṇkuṇattāñ, see Kuṟaḷ, and commentary of Parimēlaḻakar.

8 The three āgamas, Angāgama, Pūrvāgama, and Bahuśru- tiāgama, are supposed to be the Vēdas of the Jains.

9 The term used is potiyaṟai, literally the 'undergound chamber with no opening'. In Maṇi., cantos iii, l. 95; xxiii, 1·60; iv, l. 105, it is named puḻukkaṟai.

10 What is called the Sahasranāmas of the Lord. Cf. Maṇi., canto v, ll. 77-9.

NATUKAN KATAI

of the victor of Kāma. My eyes will not see, though
they seem to see, anything other than the pair of feet of
Him who overcame the Five (senses).[1] My useless body
will not touch the earth except before the holy body of
Him[2] who has taken upon himself virtue out of His grace.
My two hands will not join together to reverence any one
other than the Knower who expounds *dharma* to *Arhats*.
My crown will not suffer any flower to be placed on it
except the flower-like feet of Him who walked upon
flowers.[3] My mind will not permit me to learn by heart

anything other than the sacred words uttered by the God
of interminable bliss.'

Hearing with approval these words of praise from her,
the Cāraṇa arose from the *silāvaṭṭam* and rising to a
height of two spans, blessed Kavunti saying, 'May thy
birth-causing bondage cease!'[4] and as he went away along
a path in the sky, they worshipped him saying, 'May our
bondage cease.'

After having stepped into a boat at the landing-place
of the great river Kāvērī where rain-bearing clouds rested
on the flowery groves, the couple and the great saint
crossed over to the peerless temples on the southern bank

where they rested for a while in a flowery grove full of

fallen flowers.

Just then a trifler passed by their side in that grove

filled with fragrance, prating useless love-talk to a newly,

1 A Jitēndriya according to the Sanskritists.

2 The idea is that she will not prostrate herself before any-

body except God.

3 Cf. Kuraḷ where the expression malarmiśai ēkiṉāṉ occurs.

We have not been able to trace any legend of the God walking on

flowers.

4 Samsārapāśa-bandham.

found sweetheart.[1] Desiring to know who the couple (Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki) were, who looked like Kāma and Ratī, they approached (Kavunti) and said: 'O Saint whose body has been famished by going without food on all fast days,[2] who are these people who have come with you?' Kavuntî replied: 'They are my children. They are human beings.[3] Do not approach them.[4] They are tired on account of their journey.' The newcomers asked in return, 'O wise one, who has known all the *sāstras*, have you ever heard the children of the same parents becoming husband and wife?'

Kaṇṇaki closed her ears when she heard these sarcas- tic words and shuddered in the presence of her husband. Kavunti imprecated on them a curse of an extraordinary penance: 'Since these two seem to insult my dear one, fair as a flower garland, they shall become old jackals in the thorny forest.' Because this curse was uttered by one who had done penance, Kōvalaṉ and his wife of the fragrant tresses,

soon heard the long howl of the jackals (into which the lovers had been transformed) and trembled. They said, 'Though those who deviate from the path of virtue speak unjust words, still should it not be attributed to their ignorance?[5] O Saint, please state when these men who have blundered in your presence will be released from this curse.' The saint replied:
'Those who have descended into a lower order of birth due to lack of know- ledge will wander in trouble for twelve months in the

1 Cf. Kuraḷ, 1311; Maṇi., canto x, l. 22.

2 See Maṇi., canto xviii, l. 122; Cīvakacintāmaṇi. l. 1547.

3 The statement implies that they were not Kāma and Rati as supposed by them.

4 Implying 'go your own way.'

5 Cf. Kuraḷ, st. 127.

forest-belt outside the Uraiyūr fortress-wall; they may afterwards regain their original forms.'

After their release from the curse had been pronounced, Saint Kavunti, Kōvalan and Kaṇṇaki went to the place *vāraṇam* (Uraiyūr) so-called because once in that place a fowl, having feathers on its body, had vanquished in war

an elephant (*vāraṇa*) whose ears were as broad as a

winnowing fan.[1]

Kaṭṭurai

Thus ends the Pukār section describing the descend- ence of the Cōla line which, among the three crowned

kings,[2] shone with their strong arms glittering with brace- lets. It speaks of the monarch's virtue, valour[3] and high deeds of renown;[4] of the fame of the ancient city of

Pukār; of the greatness of festival;[5] of the visit of Dēvas;[6] of his subjects who were perpetually happy;[7] of the abundance of their food;[8] of the unparalleled glory of their faultless, divine Kāvēri,[9] of the unfailing first freshes due to seasonal rains; of their courts,[10] dances,[11] ballads and min-

1 Cf. Kaḷittokai, st. 42; Maṇi., canto xxix, l. 121.

2 The Cēra, the Cōḷa, and the Pāṇṭya, the principal kings of the Tamil land.

3 v, ll. 97-8.

4 ibid. vi, l. 14.

5 ibid. v.

6 ibid.; also vi, ll. 72-73.

7 x, ll. 149-50.

8 ibid. ll. 123-4.

9 ibid. ll. 102-109; vii, ll. 2-5; ll. 25-7.

10 iii, ll. 99 and 106.

11 iii, l. 16.

strelsies;[1] of their dramatic representations of *bārata- virutti,*[2] of erotic compositions relating to *aintiṇai*, and other analogous compositions;[3] of the tunes of their musical instruments (*yāḻ*) of the fourteen *sakōṭāms*;[4] of the *iṭanilaippālai*;[5] of their songs the *tārattākkam*[6] and the four *pans*; of the noises of the city-chariot;[7] and of the lustrous *pāṇi*;[8] all these and many more redounding to the unique glory of the king.

VEṆPĀ

Like the sun that rises in the morning and
the moon that appears in the evening, may
far-famed Pukār which forms
the garland of the sea-girt earth, live for ever.[9]

1 viii, ll. 74-108.

2 vi, ll. 39-63.

3 vi, ll. 17-23.

4 iii, l. 88.

5 iii, l. 70.

6 viii, ll. 35 and 44.

7 v, ll. 38-40.

8 iii, l. 135 and x, l. 131.

9 The idea is 'let Pukār last as long as the sun and moon endure.'

II. MATURAIK KANTAM

CANTO IX

KATUKAN KATAI

OR

THE SIGHT OF THE FOREST

UNDERNEATH the thick shade of the *asōka* tree with its hanging flowers, the woman ascetic (Kavunti) worshippad the first God Aṟivaṉ[1], more radiant than the rising sun, under three umbrellas arranged like three moons placed one above the other, and graciously spoke the good and wise words uttered by the Cāraṇar, to all the sages of the *kantaṉpaḷḷi*,[2] in the extensive grove adjoining Araṅkam.[3]

After spending that day at their residence and wishing to go in a southerly direction, Kavunti, Kōvalaṉ and

Kaṇṇaki left Vāraṇam (Uṟaiyūr) before day-break, and when the sun began to illumine the eastern sky, they reached a beautiful *naṇṭapam* situated in the midst of a grove of young trees in a fertile spot containing a tank.

1 The Nāyaṉār enshrined in the temple at Uṟaiyūr. This was a Jain temple. The expression ādiyiṟōṟṟam may mean 'the god with no beginning or end' or 'a very ancient god.'

2 This may refer to Uṟaiyūr Kantaṉpaḷḷi, the sacred hall of the Nirgranthas. Or it may refer to a shrine sacred to Kandaṉ or Subrahmaṇya.

3 Srīrangam was then known as Araṅkam and later as Tiruvaraṅkam. It is situated two miles from Trichinopoly.

There they met a venerable Brahmana who praised the Pāṇṭyan of unblemished repute thus: 'May our great king live for ever, protecting this world from aeon to aeon! Long live the Tennavan, the ruler of the southern region, who added to it[1] the Ganges and the Himalayan regions in the north, who once showed his prowess to the other kings by standing on the shore of the sea and throwing his spear upon the fierce waters which, in a spirit of revenge, consumed the river Pahruḷi[2] and the Kumari with their adjoining groups of hills.

'Long live he who wore on his shining breast the bright garland of Indra, adding glory to the lunar race! Long live our king who, when thunder-clouds withheld abundant showers, smote the bracelet[3] set in the crown of Indra, and imprisoned the clouds, so that there might be great prosperity from an unfailing harvest of crops.'

1 This is a reference to the Pāṇṭyan invasion of North India, thus corroborating the tradition that the three prominent kings of the south went on a conquering mission as far as the Himalayas. In the south itself the Pāṇṭyan wrested Muttūrkkūṟṟam from the Cōḻa and Kuṇṭūrkkūṟṟam from the Cēra (see Aṭiyārkkunallār's commentary).

2 See Puṟam., st. 9. A river Parali seems to exist even now (see The Travancore State Manual, Vol. I, p. 240 n.). Here is a legendary description of the sea eroding the land. Kumarikkōṭu may refer to the river or to the hills of Kumari. It is better to take it as a reference to the river, since a river of that name is mentioned in the Brahmāṇṭa Purāṇa.

This legend and the following are attributed to Ukra Pāṇṭyan, in the Tiruviḷaiyāṭal Purāṇam. The king is said to have stemmed the tide of the sea by throwing his spear on the rising waves. (See Kaṭalśuvaṟa vēleṟinta Tiruviḷaiyāṭal, No. 21, pp. 80-1, 2nd ed., by Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar.)

3 ibid., Intiraṉ mutimēl vaḷaiyeṟinta paṭalam. The reference is to king Ukra Pāṇṭyan.

KATUKAN KATAI

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Thereupon Kōvalaṉ asked, 'Where is

your native

home? What brings you here?'

The Brahmana of undiminishing distinction replied as

follows:

'I am a native of Mānkāṭu[1] in the region of Kuṭa-

malai (the western hills). I came to satisfy my heart's desire, to see with my own eyes the glory of Vishṇu, whom many worship with prayer as He reposes with Lakshmī in His breast, on the couch of the thousand-hooded Serpent, in the temple in Turutti[2] jutting out on the widening waves of the Kāvēri, even as the blue clouds repose supine on the slopes of the lofty golden mountain (Mēru). (I also came to see) the beauty of the red-eyed Lord, holding in His beautiful lotus-hands the discus which is death to His enemies, and also the milk-white conch: (to see Him) wearing a garland of tender flowers on His breast, and draped in golden flowers; and dwelling on the topmost crest of the tall and lofty hill named Vēnkaṭam,[3] with innumerable waterfalls, standing like a cloud in its natural hue, adorned with a rainbow and attired with lightning, in the midst of a place both sides of which are illumined by the spreading rays of the sun and

the moon.

'Since I saw to the delight of my eyes, the glory and the greatness of the Pāṇṭyan kingdom,[4] I stayed here blessing the king. This is the reason of my coming here.'

1 Also known as Māṉkāl.

2 The term turutti. denotes an islet in general. To venture a conjecture the place under reference may be Srīrangam lying between the Kāvēri and the Coleroon.

3 The modern Tirupati Hill. See canto vi, l. 30 above. It is stilll famous for the number of its waterfalls.

4 It is worth noting that the poet stresses the glory of the Pāṇṭyan through the mouth of a Brahmana who does not belong

Having heard this from the Brahmana who had

performed the Vēdic sacrifices, Kōvalaṉ said, 'O first

among Brahmanas! Pray tell us the best route to

Madura.'

The Brahmana replied: 'You have come with your

lady in the season when jungle and mountain tracts have

given up their natural appearance and taken the form of

a desert, losing their smooth surfaces, thus causing deep

distress, since King Sun, along with his minister Spring, by reason of his fierce heat, has diminished his essential

quality and lost his beneficence, like a great kingdom whose

monarch has deviated from the path of right policy under

the influence of an unrighteous councillor.[1]

'If, in this long journey, you "swim" across rocks,

hillocks (*poṟai*),[2] illusory places and the bunds of lakes full

of water, and reach Koṭumbai[3] by the bund of a great

to his kingdom. The greatness of the kingdom is to be contrasted with the injustice meted out to Kōvalaṉ later by the king, and the consequent bending of the rod of justice. It must be noted also

that the age-long righteous sceptre only bent and did not break. For did not Kaṇṇaki herself claim to be the king's daughter and inform us of his innocence? (See 'Vāḻttukkāṭai', xxix, p. 577).

1 Here the author of the epic wants to convey to the reader,

by comparison and contrast, the impressions of unrighteous rule

and the consequent prevalence of anarchy in the land.

2 Also known as pottaimalai.

3 Koṭumpāḷūr containing a tank Neṭuṅkuḷam. It was the capital from which the Vēḷir line of kings ruled. The present town Koṭumpāḷūr in Pudukkottai State contains a large number of inscriptions forming excellent historical material for reconstructing the history of the Vēḷir line. One of the inscriptions supplies the genealogy of this ruling family. Thus the Koṭumpai of the Cilappatikāram played an important part in the early and medieval history of South India. According to the Periyapurāṇam, Iṭaṅ-

lake, you will come to a spot which looks like the devour- ing trident[1] wielded by the God

whose tuft is adorned with a crescent.

'If you decide to take the route lying to the right and pass by the *kaṭampa* tree with outspread branches, the dried *ōmai* tree, the *vākai* with its cloven stem, the withered bamboo, the equally withered *maral* dark with fissures, jungles where thirsty deer roam about vainly in search of water, and the haunts of the Eiyṉar,[2] you will come across the celebrated Siṟumalai[3] of the Pāṇṭyan covered on all sides with plants of wild rice, ripe sugar-cane, full-grown millets, *ragi* that grows on rich soil, garlic, saffron, beautiful *kavalai* creepers, plantains, arecas, coconuts growing in bunches, mangoes and jack tree. Keep that hill on your right and reach Madura.

'If you do not take that route, but choose the route to the left, you will hear winged beetles singing the tune of *sevvaḻi*,[4] in the low-lying fields, in glades with cool flowers, and in jungles, primarily desert regions. Passing

these you reach Tirumalkuṉṟam,[5] that opens

into a cave which kaḷi Nāyaṉār, one of the sixty-three Saiva saints, had Koṭumpāḷūr for his capital. (See Chronological List of Inscriptions of the Pudukkottai State, 1929, Nos. 14, 33, 82, etc.; An. Rep. Ep., 1907-8, paras. 87-9.)

1 This indicates that from that spot branched off three routes as explained in the text below.

2 See Dikshitar's article 'Elyṉar' in Sentamil, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, for other details.

3 Literally, the little hill. This hill exists today bearing the same name and is noted for its sweet plantains.

4 Sevvali is a primary melody-type of the Mullai region. Cf. Puṟam., st. 144.

5 Tirumalkuṉṟam (literally, the hill sacred to Vishṇu) is the name of a hill near Madura, known as

Irumcōlai and Triumaḷirum.

removes all delusion, and leads to the miraculous three ponds, greatly praised by the gods, and called the sacred Śaravaṇam,[1] Bava-kāraṇi and Iṭṭaśiddi,[2] ever renowned. If you bathe in the sacred Śaravaṇam, you will gain knowledge of the book attributed to the king of the gods (*Aindra-Vyākaraṇam*);[3] if you bathe in the Bava-kāraṇi, you will learn the deeds of your past which led to your present birth; if, on the other hand, you bathe in the Iṭṭaśiddi pond, you will gain all that you wish for.

'If you choose to enter that cave, worship then the great Lord on that very lofty hill, meditating on His

colai, isung of by most of the Āḻvārs. See also Paripāṭal, st. 15.

According to this authority this place was noted for the worship of Vāsudēva and Balarāma. It is not clear when the cult of Balarāma became extinct here or in the Tamil land generally. Today this shrine is known as the Aḷakarmalai. It seems that Aḷakar may be a representation of the form of Balarāma, and not necessarily of Krishṇa. Sundararājan is the Sanskrit rendering of the term Aḷakar.

1 This and the two following are the names of tanks, what we now call Puṣkaraṇi, to bathe in which was supposed to purify. The Sanskrit Purāṇas are full of such lakes noted for their miraculous properties.

2 Sanskrit Iṣṭasiddhi.

3 A grammatical treatise by name Viṇṇavarkōmāṉ Viḷunūl attributad to Indra. The reference in

the Cilappatikāram is
possibly to
the Aindra-Vyākaraṇam, the oldest school of Sanskrit
grammarians, known to and quoted
by Pāṇini and others. It is

mentioned in Buddhist Canonical works like the
(C. Lassen, I. A. K., Vol. II, 2nd ed., p. 477);

Avadānaśataka
cf. Tāranātha's
History of Indian Buddhism (Schiefner's
trans., p. 54). That
this grammar was known to
Tolkāppiyaṉār is evident from the
preface to the Tolkāppiyam.
On this subject there is an excellent
monograph by A. C. Burnell entitled On the School of Sanskrit Grammarians, 1875.

lotus-feet and going thrice round the hill;
there, on the broad banks of the Cilambāru[1]

cutting its way through the soil, will appear at the flower-strewn base of the blossom- ing *kōṅku* tree, a nymph[2] fair as a golden creeper, as striking as lightning with cloud-like locks of dark hair, and with serrated bracelets on her shoulders, saying: "Tell me what constitutes the happiness of this birth,[3] the happi- ness of the next[4] and also eternal happiness[5] which results neither in birth nor rebirth. I live on this mountain and my name is Varōttamā. To them who answer these questions I am bound in service. So, good people, if

1 Also known as the Nūpura-Gangā We have, similarly, Ākāśa-Gangā, Pātāla-Gangā, etc.

2 The reference is to a Yakṣiṇī. From the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīkī we are led to infer that the Yakṣas were one of the South Indian tribes contemporaneous with the epoch of Rāvaṇa and Vāli The Yakṣas were the ruling tribe in Ceylon in the fifth century B.C. when Vijaya landed there. But they had practically become extinct by the commencement of the Christian era though a few lingered here and

there in forest regions. See Dikshitar's paper 'South India in the Rāmāyaṇa' in the Proceedings of the Seventh Oriental Conference 1933, p. 243 ff.

3 Poruḷ (Sans., artha) or wealth is said to constitute one's happiness in this birth. The idea is that a man of no wealth will always feel miserable. See the Mānavadharmaśāstra, ch. 2, st. 224: Cāṇakya Rāja Nīti Sāstra, canto iv, st. 21: also, Tirukkōvai, st. 332.

4 Good and righteous deeds on earth contribute to happiness after death. The fruits of actions in this birth are judged and rewarded only in the next birth. This is, in other words, the theory of pre-ordained fate.

5 Salvation or freedom from the bondage of samsāra or worldly life is said to be the highest of the Puruṣārthas. Cf. Kuraḷveṇpā, 233; Puṟam., st. 50. See also Dikshitar, Hindu Administrative Institutions, p. 37.

you give the right answer, I shall open the door (leading to this cave). On opening the door several passages with entrances will be revealed, and beyond them a gateway with double doors. Beyond that, a creeper-like lady resembling a picture[1] will again appear before you asking, 'What is eternal bliss?'[2] If you reply, you will obtain one of three desired things.[3] But if you are not able to answer, I shall not harm you. You can go on your long journey; I shall help you."

'If people answer her questions she will show them the three ponds mentioned above, and retire. If you bathe therein, desirous and uttering any one of these things, meditating upon and uttering with equal reverence the two great Vedic mantras of five letters[4] and eight letters[5] you will achieve results which cannot be realized even by the hardest of penances

'If you do not desire these benefits, meditate on the lotus-feet of the Lord standing on that hill. If you so meditate, there will appear His lofty Eagle standard. By

1 The word vaṭṭikai in the text means a picture or portrait.

2 Mōkṣa is the term for this in Sanskrit literature.

3 The reference is to muppāl or trivarga of Sanskrit literature.

4 The significance of the Pañcākṣara mantra Namaśivāya is brought out here. Constant meditation on it is said to rid one of all ills. Even today many orthodox Hindus are initiated by their gurus and continue meditating on this great mantra sacred to Siva.

5 This is the Aṣṭākṣara 'Ōm namōnārāyaṇāya'. This statement is significant in as much as it proves that the spirit of sectarianism was still non-existent. For, while the Pañcākṣara is sacred to Siva, the Aṣṭākṣara is sacred to Nārāyaṇa or Viṣhṇu. It is said that the two mantras must be uttered with equal reverence. Belief in the efficacy of such mantras is still current.

its mere sight and by meditation on His

lotus-feet there

will be no more rebirth. Rejoicing in that thought go

to Madura of traditional glory. Such is the sight worth seeing in that cave.

'If you reject these routes, there is the straight path

that lies midway between them with pleasant villages and

groves and several jungles therein. Beyond these dwells

a terrific deity who appears to travellers, not causing

fear but treating them with civility and causing no

harm. If you escape this, the path to Madura will of

itself be known to you. So depart and I shall go (to

sacred places) to worship the feet of the Lord who

measured the whole universe.'[1]

After listening to the Brahmana's account of the routes,

the saint Kavunti made a categorical reply: 'O Brahmana

versed in the four Vēdas and engaged in doing good!

We have no wish to go to the cave. The literature given

by Indra, who lives longer than the Dēvas, can be found

in our holy scriptures.[2] If you wish to know of deeds

done in the past, do you not look for them in the present

birth? Is there anything that cannot be gained by those

who lead a life of truthfulness and non-injury?[3] Go your

way seeking the feet of the God sacred to you. We go

the way suited to us.' After speaking words befitting the

occasion to that Brahmana, she spent

that day in a
resting-place along with Kōvalaṉ who never swerved from
his principles.

1 The reference is to the Trivikrama Avatār of Vishṇu.

2 The Aindra-Vyākaraṇam, according to tradition, belongs to the Paramāgamas of the Jains.

3 The chief Jaina doctrines. Here we may note Kavunti's reply to the Brahmana who quoted his scriptures. In meeting all his three points she seems to imply that the Jaina scriptures contain these and more.

Then they resumed their journey.

One day, the sage

Kavunti and the lady of the long dark eyes rested them-

selves on the way owing to fatigue. From that place

frequented (by people), an adjoining pathway branched

off, which Kōvalaṉ took and reached a lake and stood on

its great bank to slake his thirst.

Then the forest-deity[1] passion-lorn and hoping that he might fall in love with

her, appeared before him in the form of Vasantamālā.

Like a trembling creeper she fell at his feet and shed false

tears saying, 'Mātavi told me, "I am not guilty of what I wrote on the fragrant garland. You must have told

Kōvalaṉ some falsehood, which made him harsh towards

me.'' Saying this, she fell in a faint overcome by grief,

but (recovering) said, "The worst of all careers is that of

a courtesan, shunned like a disease by pious and learned

men who avert their faces, and by people who can distin-

guish right from wrong."[2] In this way she burst into

tears which dropped like pearls from her cool eyes, and

with her hands she wrenched her string of lustrous white

pearls and scattered them. Forsaken by her, and hearing

the news from travellers on their way from the ancient

city of Madura, I have come in great distress along with

a caravan.[3]

Generous man, what relief can you give me?'.

1 Belief in forest-deities was very

usual. They were supposed to assume any form. For instance, the deity that appeared before Kōvalan̲ assumed the guise of Vasantamālā, the maid in attendance on the courtesan Mātavi.

2 See Maṇi., canto xxiv, l. 79. The author ridicules the life of the courtesan by making Mātavi herself condemn it. According to him any decent and self-respecting man looks upon a prostitute as the embodiment of disease.

3 The word śātta (Sans, sārtha) is a reference to the caravan trade carried on in those days between one part of the country and the other by groups of merchants.

Having been appraised by the distinguished Brahmana
that in that dreadful forest there was a luring deity,
Kōvalan decided to employ the mantra to disillusion him-
self about the identity of that lady. The mantra he uttered
was the mantra[1] sacred to the goddess riding on the deer,[2]
so that the deity went away confessing,[3] 'I that deluded
you am a spirit of the forest. Pray do not tell of this
misdeed of mine to your wife, lovely as a peacock, or to
the holy sage, but go your way.'

Carrying water in a lotus-leaf[4] to the weary women
he relieved them of their distressing thirst. Finding that
it was not possible to proceed farther in that

desert-region
as the rays of the sun ascending the heavens increased in
heat, Kōvalan, Kaṇṇaki of the curved ear-rings, and the
saint, came upon a flowery grove of the *kurava, kadamba,*
kōñku and *vēṅkai,* closely intertwined with one another.
There they entered the shrine of Aiyai-kumari[5] who dwells

1 Another instance of faith and belief in the efficacy of
mantras.

2 This goddess is known by other names such as Antari,
Śakti, or Āiykalaippāvai. Kōvalan shows here that he was a
Śakti-upāsaka, or a devout worshipper of the goddess as Śakti.
For a history of the cult see R. G. Bhandarkar, op. cit., pp.

142-6.

3 Here is the deity's confession of guilt. She could not withstand the efficacy of a Vēdic mantra.

4 This shows that Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki did not even take a drinking vessel with them.

5 The deity worshipped by the Vaṭuvar or the Maṟavar. She is known by different names. Cf. Matsya Purāṇa, chap. 154, st. 73-83, where the Creator addresses Vibhāvarī the night-deity. In the Harivamśa there is a hymn to Āpya (Durgā) in which she is represented as the goddess of Śabaras, Pulindas, Barbaras, and other wild tribes, and as fond of wine and flesh. See R. G. Bhan-

in heaven, whose eye was in Her forehead and who was worshipped by the gods. From those hardy bow- men whose lands were unvisited by rains, and whose bows were therefore their ploughs, and who deprived passers-by of their belongings, she expected sacrificial offerings in return for Her blessing them with victory when, as if guided by Yama, they invaded the neighbour- ing territory with their cruel bows.

darkar, op. cit., p. 143.

Aiyaikōṭṭam was the name of the temple where Koṟṟavai or the Goddess of Victory was enshrined. She is known as Kāḷi or Mahākāḷi in Sanskrit literature, and we thus see a marvellous blending of two ancient cultures, evolving what is known as the Śakti cult.

CANTO XII

VETTUVA VARI

OR

THE HUNTERS' SONG

THE sun continued to spread his cruel, fierce rays and made it impossible (for the travellers) to go on their journey. She of the fragrant locks of hair (Kaṇṇaki) breathed hard, and her tender feet were red with blisters: so they rested in an unfrequented place in the temple of Aiyai.[1]

Later, Cāliṇi,[2] born in the family of the Maṟavar who ever had bows in their hands, began her dance with appropriate gestures and became possessed with divinity, her hair standing on end, and her hands

raised aloft; she
continued to dance moving from one place to another to the wonderment of the foresters, in the *manram*, the common eating-place[3] of

the Eiynar[4] situated in the midst

1 From the earliest times Aiyai or Korravai has been the
favourite deity of hunters in South India. The goddess was worshipped as the Goddess of Victory. Her temple was located in a
manram in the middle of the village. A manram was a common
meeting-place for village folk, answering to the public hall of a
town today.

2 A woman Possessed with divinity. Generally, an old lady
of the family of hunters who considered herself inspired and
spoke out as if she were herself a goddess.

3 This points to the custom among the Maravar of eating

from a common table.

4 The expression in the text for this is ūr-naṭu-maṉṟam,
This implies that there were other maṉṟams also.

of the village, encircled by a thorny fence. She then proclaimed aloud their unfulfilled vows thus:

'The cattle-herds of the towns of your enemies are

flourishing: the common places (*maṉṟam*) of the strong-

bowed Eiyṉar are lying empty: the Eiyṉar of the Maṟavar

tribe have become meek like persons observing *dharma*,

and no more rob the wealth of passers-by. Unless you

render[1] what is due to the goddess riding on the stag,[2]

She will not send victory to attend your bows, O ye that live by robbery![3] If you desire to live merrily drinking toddy, render your dues.'

From among the ancient family of the Eiyṉar, who preferred offering their own heads in sacrifice to cremation[4] (after dying a natural death), a virgin[5] was chosen

1 The Maṟavar generally made a vow to their goddess just before an expedition to celebrate their hoped-for victory by a sacrificial offering.

2 Kalittokai, st. 39, ll 12-14.

3 The Maṟavar were addicted to drinking toddy, and their only occupation was highway robbery.

4 It is remarkable to note that the method of disposal of the dead among this primitive tribe was cremation and

not burial. It has been assumed by certain scholars that burial was a custom of the pre-Aryam tribes, and cremation was a later introduction. This statement of Iḷankō-Aṭikaḷ, who lived nearly one thousand eight hundred years before our time, is entitled to respect, and judged by this, it seems that both cremation and burial were as much the institutions of the Aryans as of the pre-Aryans. Both have been prevalent from prehistoric times, and it is impossible to decide which institution is the older.

5 Here we are introduced to the actual method of worship in vogue among these primitive tribes. It was usual to select a virgin from among their community and make her appear like the godless installed in the shrine. This virgin was taken in procession to the temple of their guardian-deity and worshipped in front

to represent the goddess. Her short hair was dressed in the form of a *jaṭa* (the coiffure of Śiva), and ornamented with a small silver snake and a crescent-like semicircular tooth from wild hog which had destroyed tender plants in well-guarded fields. Her *tāli* was a necklace made of white teeth plucked from a strong-limbed tiger,[1] and her girdle was a cleaned tiger-skin with mingled spots and stripes on its outer surface. The bow in her hand was of heart-wood. She was mounted upon a stag with twisted horns. The Eiyṉar ladies, who feted her with offerings of dolls, parrots, wild fowls of soft feathers, blue peacocks, balls (*pandu*) and *kaḻaṅku*, followed her carrying paints, powders, cool and fragrant pastes, boiled grains, sweets of gingili seeds,

rice with meat, flowers, frankincense, and fragrant scents, when she was taken before the shrine of Aṇaṅku who accepts sacrificial offerings in return for victory. This was accompanied by the beating of the drum used during highway robbery, and the blowing of the trumpet, generally heard when looting, the horn and the pipe, and the ringing of the loud bell, simultaneously. There she worshipped Her with the stag for Her mount, and became inspired. Pointing to Kaṇṇaki, of the fragrant locks of hair, standing with weary little feet by

of the shrine, where the goddess was said to appear and approve what the damsel spoke. The commentator Aṭiyārkkunallār is not clear here. He seems to take the virgin to be the idol enshrined in the temple itself. This cannot be accepted in the light off ll. 72-3 where it is expressly stated that the Kumari in the shrine

blessed the Kumari of the Eiyṉar.

1 The Eiyn̲ar decked their goddess with ornaments and clothes peculiar to their mores. For instance, a tiger-skin and an elephant-skin formed the clothing of their goddess. Similarly the teeth of the tiger formed her garland. From the description given it is to be understood that their virgin goddess becomes later on the consort of the God Śiva and assumes all His paraphernalia.

the side of her husband, she spake as follows:[1] 'This is
the lady of the Koṅkunāṭu, the mistress of the Kuṭa-
malai (the western hills), the queen of the south Tamil
country, and the sprout of her (Kaṇṇaki's) prior penance;
she is *tirumāmaṇi* (literally, the bright jewel) far-famed as

the peerless gem of the world.'[2]

At this Kaṇṇaki smiled a derisive smile and stood
modestly behind the broad back of her dear husband
thinking that this soothsayer spoke in ignorance.

Just then, She who wore the moon in Her coiffure,
who had an unwinking eye in Her forehead, coral lips,
white teeth, a throat darkened by poison,[3] who had the
serpent Vāsuki of unquenchable ire for Her girdle, and
mount Mēru for Her shoulder-bangles, whose breasts were
enclosed within a bodice resembling a serpent's venomous
teeth, and who wore elephant hide for Her upper garment
and a lion's (tiger's?) skin for Her

petticoat, (appeared),
with a trident in Her bangled hands. Her left foot was
adorned with *cilampu* and the right with a victorious anklet.
Skilled in sword-fighting, the Lady who stood on the head

1 The inspired Cāliṉi could read the future and therefore foretold what Kaṇṇaki was to become. Neither Kaṇṇaki nor her party realized the implications of these statements and Kaṇṇaki showed that she had no faith in such reports.

2 A note may be made of the significant terms orumāmaṇi, and tirumāmaṇi attributed to Kaṇṇaki by the inspired Cāliṉi. It is not possible to get at the implications of these terms, but it is a remarkable coincidence that the

Narriṇai, another Caṅkam classic, refers to the incident of Kaṇṇaki's casting off one of her breasts and uses the expression tirumāmaṇi. Perhaps it was the title given to Kaṇṇaki after she was installed as the Goddess of Chastity. This reference is enough to show that the Narriṇai belongs to the post-Cilappatikāram epoch.

3 Sans., Nīlakaṇṭhī,

of the double-bodied broad-shouldered Asura,[1] the goddess worshipped by many, Kumari, Kavuri (Sans., Gaurī),[2]

Śamari (Sans., Saṃhārī or the slayer), the holder of the trident, She whose hue is blue, the younger sister of

Vishṇu[3] the giver of victory, the holder of the cruel axe,

Durgā,[4] Lakṣhmī, Sarasvatī,[5] the image adorned with rare gems, the ever-youthful Kumari whom

Vishṇu and
Brahmā came to worship, declared the form and attire of
the divinity-possessed Kumari quite god-like.

URAIPPĀṬṬUMAṬAI

(The glory of the courtyard)[6]

In front of the sacrificial altar of the Goddess who sits
by the side of the three-eyed God, the *nākam* and the
sweet *naraṅtai* flowered luxuriantly;
everywhere the *āccā*

1 The deity is named Mahiṣāsuramardanī. The Story of the Dēvī who destroyed the demon in the shape of a buffalo is found in almost all the Purāṇas.

2 For an interpretation of the term Gauri, see Dikshitar's article 'Umāgauri' in the Kalaimagal, Vol III, p. 227 ff.

3 According to literary tradition, as embodied in legends, Durgā is the sister of Vishṇu. According to the Harivamśa the Dēvī was born to Yaśodā, and when she was dashed against a stone, she attained heaven. Hence she is said to be a sister of Vāsudēva—Kṛṣṇa.

4 Durgā described as Śiva-Śakti.

5 It is remarkable to find a total absence of sectarianism in the Cilappatikāram. Kumari is addressed as Durgā who rode a stag, as Lakshmī (Paimtoṭippāvai) and as Sarasvatī (the deity sacred to learning), the respective consorts of the Hindu triad, Śiva, Vishṇu and Brahmā.

6 These three stanzas are addressed to the glory of the courtyard of the shrine dedicated to Aiyai. It was adorned by a grove of trees bearing flowers of different hues and fragrance.

tree and the sandal rose high: also
the *se* tree and the mango were thick with foliage.

In front of the shrine of Her who wears the crescent in Her coiffure, the *vēṅkai* tree shed its golden flowers: numerous were the branches of the excellent *ilava* (cotton) tree. The *puṅka* let fall its white petals.

In front of the shrine of the younger sister of Vishṇu, blossomed the *kadamba* tree, the *pātiri*, *puṉṉai*, odorous *kuravu*, and *kōṅku*; and on their branches swarms of bees hummed as if playing upon the *yāḻ*,

Again,[1]

(The Kuṟava girl said) 'O, how wonderful is the pen-
ance of this damsel of golden ornaments who stands here
assuming the form and adornment of the Goddess of
Victory! The only family worthy of mention is that of
the hunter-archers,[2] in which this damsel of golden bangles
was born.

'O, how wonderful is the penance of this damsel with
a waist like the hood of a cobra,[3] who now stands adorned

1 The editor of the text informs us that, according to some manuscripts, this and the following two stanzas are in the praise of Çālini engaged in dancing.

2 We get further light on the customs and manners of the Maṛavar. They were great hunters and archers. If we compare their mode of living with the elaborate and luxurious life said to have been led both by town folk and village folk in other parts of the book, we have only to infer that persistence is writ large in the cultural development of the ancient Tamils. Their primitive occupations have been continued down to historical times.

3 The word alkul which occurs frequently in Tamil classics is very difficult to translate. It seems to stand for that part of the abdomen below the navel.

with the decoration of Aiyai!
mention is that family of the
The only family worthy of
Eiyṉar who used to shoot
their arrows, in which she was born.

'O, how wonderful is the penance of

this damsel of
lovely bangles who stands with the trappings of Her who rides fast upon the stag! The only family worthy of mention is that family of the Eiynar with bamboo bows, in which this damsel of lovely bangles was born.'

Again,

'How is it that you, who
gods and stand undaunted as

receive the worship of all
the sprouting wisdom in
the Vēda of all Vēdas, once stood upon the

dark head of
the wild buffalo, clad in a tiger's skin and
self with an elephant's skin?

covering your-

'How is it that you who stand as the

shining light spreading its rays over the lotus-heart of Hari, Hara and Brahmā, also stood upon the stag with the dark-twisted

horns, after slaying Mahiṣāsura, holding your sword in your bangled hands?

'How is it that you who stand

praised by the Vēdas
as the consort of Him who has an

eye in His forehead
and the Ganges in His coiffure,

stood upon a fierce red-eyed lion,[1] holding a conch and discus in your lotus-hands?'

1 The lion is the steed of Durgā.

Legend has it that Vibhāvarī, the Goddess of Night, entered into Umā's body at the order of the Creator. After Umā's marriage with Śiva, Vibhāvarī was ordered to leave Umā's body and reside in the Vindhya hills. Here the Dēvī was given a lion to ride. See Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 157. Treatises on architecture in Sanskrit and the evidence of sculpture testify that the lion was invariably the steed of this goddess as was the stag also. It is but natural that a daughter of

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There,[1]

With a garland made of the *konrai* flower and with a shoulder-garment of basil leaves, this damsel in the form of Kumari, began dancing to the delight of the Devas, and to the distress of the Asuras.

'*Again*,

Sword in hand, and to the repeated tinkling of her
metal-filled anklet, her bracelet, and her waist-band all of
gold, our Goddess danced the *marakkāl*[1] to vanquish the
deceitful Asuras who also bore swords. If She, sword in
hand, could perform that dance on the *marakkāl*[2] to van-
quish the deceitful Asuras, who also bore swords, the

gods would praise Her of the hue of *kāya*, and shower
flowers on Her with their hands.

At the time when an unrivalled and fierce warrior of a small village sets out to seize the enemy's cattle,[3] and
is desirous of wearing the *veṭci* garland,[4] he invokes the
the Great Mountain thick with forests, should have the stag or the lion as her favourite animal.

1 What follows is the dance of victory by Durgā.

2 Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar explains thus: 'When the Asuras
sent illusory reptiles and scorpions over Her, 'Durgā with wooden
legs danced with a spear in Her hand.' This is called the
marakkāl dance of Durgā.

3 Karantai is a theme for recovering a herd of cattle captured by the enemy and is regarded as a declaration of war.
Karantaiyar are those warriors who rescue the

cattle seized by the enemy. See Tamil Lexicon, p. 743. Here we have to note that cattle-lifting was one of the causes of ancient Tamil warfare.

4 Cf. Pura, veṇpāmālai, 'Veṭci', st. 3, where cattle-lifting is under reference. The veṭci garland was a symbolical representation of success over an enemy.

aid of the Goddess who slays with Her shining sword. O if he should desire to wear the *veṭci* garland and invoke the aid of Her who slays with the bright sword, the king- crow[1] of the forest will send forth its ominous note in the enemy's village.

When the female vendor of toddy[2] refuses to serve the angry Maṛavaṉ he will draw his bow, and observing the good omen of birds, start out in search of the enemy's cattle.

And at the time when he goes out in search of the enemy's cattle, observing the omen of birds, the Goddess of Victory will raise Her lion-standard and march in front of his bow.[3]

Again,

'O young maid with lovely teeth, behold! The great
herds of cattle, which your elders brought by capture in
former times, have filled the courtyards of the blacksmiths,[4]
drummers, and celebrated bards who play on the *yāḻ*.

1 The crying of the king-crow is a bad omen. This points to the custom of foretelling future events from the actions of birds. It may be remembered that in ancient Rome there was an augur—a religious official who foretold future events by omens

taken from the actions of birds. Such superstitious beliefs were common in the ancient world.

2 The implication is that the Eiyṉar has failed to pay his old dues owing to poverty, because of slackness in his profession which consisted of looting his neighbours' cattle.

3 The flag of aḷi is appropriate to the goddess whose steed was a lion.

4 See Puṟam., st. 312. Distribution of the captured property was made among blacksmiths, spies, soothsayers, toddy-sellers, bards and drummers. Special mention may be made of the use of spies by the Eiyṉar.

'O girl with white teeth, behold! The herds of cattle, captured by your elders to the distress of their defenders, have filled the courtyards of

the women who sell toddy, of the expert forest spy, and of the soothsayers who interpret bird omens.

'O girl with eyes smeared with collyrium and like *kāya* flowers, behold! The big herds of cattle seized by your elders causing distress to the enemy's villages, have filled the courtyards of the grey-moustached Eiyṉar of unsympathetic speech, and of their old women'

TURAIPPĀṬṬUMAṬAI[1]

Again,[2]

'We have worshipped your two feet that graciously relieve the suffering of the Dēvas and the Muṉis who roam in company of the sun. Now accept this blood,[3] by cutting our necks, as the price of the victory you confer upon the brave and strong Eiyṉar.

1 Turaippāṭṭu is a verse which illustrates minor themes in Akam and Puṟam.

2 This and the following two stanzas are styled

avippali by the commentator. Here is an allusion to the tradition that sages like the Vālakhilyas go with the sun as he moves. See Puram., st. 43, and Tirumurukā., l. 107 and the commentary thereon. See Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 126, st. 28-45; Brahmāṇṭa Purāṇa, ch. 23. It is said that as many as seven gaṇas including gods and sages followed the sun in his course. The other five are the Nāgas, Yakṣas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, and Rākṣasas.

3 Also Kurutippalli ; see Aṭiyārkkunallār's gloss,

The idea of a human sacrifice belongs to the primitive neo-lithic peoples, and it would not be far from the truth to consider these hunters to be the descendants of early neolithic inhabitants of South India. See also F. J. Richards's article 'Sidelights on the Dravidian Problem' in the Q.J.M.S., Vol. VI, pp. 156-201.

'We have worshipped the lotus-feet of

you who are like a blue gem, and who are worshipped by the gods along with their crowned king. Accept the flesh and blood offered to you as the price of the great victory you confer upon the Eiyṉar, in their seizure of herds of cattle.

'O Kumari! Accept the blood of sacrifice[1] at your altar in fulfilment of the oath made, touching your feet, by the tiger-like Eiyṉar, who sally forth in the dead of night, with *tuṭi,* the small *paṟai,* and the pipe, sounding as if to pierce the sky.'

THE OFFERING OF SACRIFICE[2]

'O Śankari, Antari, Nili, who wear in your coiffures
the red-eyed serpent along with the crescent! Accept this
sacrifice from the Eiyṉar with strong bows and arrows,
and in answer to our prayer grant that travellers[3] may
come oftener that (by robbing them) we may

increase our
riches.

'O you, who blessed the Dēvas, who had to face death
in spite of having drunk nectar! O you, who are immortal
even though you drank the poison which can be drunk by
no one, eat this offering made by us, the heartless Eiyṉar,
who enter neighbouring villages when all are sleeping, and
sound our *tuṭis* before we plunder them.

1 It is evident that the time of sacrifice and worship by
these hunters was the dead of night, when the whole world was
sleeping.

2 The following three stanzas describe the actual offering of
sacrifice.

3 These hunters pray for the prosperity of travellers because

they are one source of their livelihood.

'O you, who blessed all by kicking the rolling wheel sent in disguise by your uncle (Kamsā)[1] and walked through the *maruta* tree,[2] accept this offering given as your due, by us the ungrateful Eiyṉar, who know nothing but how to rob people of their wealth and cause[3] unhappiness.'

Again,

May the Pāṇṭyan greedy for victory, and the Lord of the lofty, fertile Potiyil hill where dwells the sage next in rank to Brahmā[4] who gave us the Vēdas, wear the *veṭci* flower in his crown leading to the ruin of his enemy's camp and of the defence of their cattle.

1 For a version of this legend see the

Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Bk. X, ch. 7, st. 6-7. Kamsā sent an Asura in the form of a rolling wheel which the baby Krishṇa kicked, and broke to pieces.

2 ibid, ch. 10, st. 23 ff. The reference is to two Gandharvas who became two arjuna trees by the curse of Nārada. Krishṇa, being a mischievous baby, was one day tied to a mortar by his mother. With that he ran between the two trees, making them prostrate on the earth. This relieved both the Gandharvas from the curse of the sage. The Vishṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V. ch. 6, st. 12-17, gives a slightly different version of this incident as also of the breaking of the wheel by Kṛishṇa.

3 Cf. Kalittokai, st. 15, where this very line occurs as if one is a copy of the other.

4 Agastya was born after Brahmā according to Aṭiyārk- kunallār. But the Arumpatavural says that he was born after Mahēśvara. Naccinārkkiniyar is unable to Maturaikkāñci, ll. 40-2, commentary. See

accept this view. See also Matsya Purāṇa

(ch. 61, st. 17 f.), where he is said to have been pitcher and as a brother of Vaiṣṭha.

born from a

CANTO XIII

PURANCERI IRUTTA KATAI

OR

THE SUBURBS OF MADURA

AFTER the departure of Cālini, the female religious dancer, Kōvalan paid his respects to the feet of the first among saints (Kavunti) and said:

'This girl cannot stand the scorching rays of the sun: and her tender feet can no more endure the gravel of this barren region. As this is the kingdom of the Pāṇṭyan of the righteous sceptre,[1] whose fame has spread far in all

directions, the fierce bear will not hunt the terrible ant-hill,[2] the striped tiger will not be at enmity with the deer; the reptile, the malignant spirit, the crocodile in search of its prey, and thunder will cause no distress to friends. Instead of travelling by daylight, we can cross this forest by night in the light of the moon who protects many living beings.[3] We will suffer no harm.'

The saint accepted the suggestion with approval.

1 The poet ironically makes Kōvalaṉ refer to the righteous sceptre of the Pāṇṭyan when he first enters the city of Madura where, later, injustice is done to him.

2 Notice the author's correct knowledge of the habits of animals. It is said that the bear eats from the purru. The impli- cation here is that even wild animals behaved righteously in the Pāṇṭyan kingdom.

3 The days were so hot that night travelling was preferred.

Before these travellers, who awaited the departure of the cruel sun like the subjects of a tyrannical king,[1] appeared the ancestor of the Pāṇṭyas,[2] the moon, with his retinue of stars, spreading his milk-white rays, when Mother Earth heaved a deep sigh and fell asleep after expressing pity (on Kaṇṇaki) in the words:

'Dear girl, up to this time thou hast not suffered either the starlike necklace or the sandal-paste to adorn thy young breasts; thou hast not permitted thy locks of hair to be dressed with the flower-dust-laden lily linked up in a chain with other flowers; thou hast not allowed thy body, soft as a tender shoot, to be decorated with garlands, made from the fresh petals of many a flower. Art thou now attracted by the south wind, born in the Malaya hills, nourished in Madura and ever on the tongues of poets, blowing over thee, and by the spring moon shedding his milk-white rays copiously upon thee?'

Kōvalaṉ said to his wife, fatigued by the journey: 'This night,[3]

the tiger will cross our path, the owl will

1 Cf. Perumkatai, Bk. LII. canto i, l. 81; also Perumpāṇārruppaṭai, ll. 42-3. The subjects of a cruel king look forward anxiously to the departure of their monarch.

2 Tradition attributes the Pāṇṭyan dynasty to a branch of the lunar race. See Cila., canto iv, l. 22. Recent investigations have not thrown much light on the origin of this ancient dynasty, which is certainly more ancient than the visit of Megasthenes to India. Ktesias refers to a people called Pandore, while Clitarchus and Megasthenes call them Mandi (Pāndai?). See Ancient India by J. N. McCrindle, Frag. XXX. In the present state of our knowledge the theory of an indigenous origin of the dynasty lacks much force and can be said to be inconclusive. See Studies in Tamil Literature and History, p. 179, for their probable origin.

3 According to Aṭiyārkkunallār, this day was the last day of the month of Āṉi (June-July).

screech, the bear will make a thundering sound; but walk fearlessly on.' He placed her fair arms shining with bangles to rest upon his shoulders.

Then they passed through the forest listening to the righteous words of all-knowing[1] and venerable Kavunti, till a wild fowl, dwelling in a thicket of bamboos which had been scorched by the hot sun, announced the approach of dawn.

(At that time) they reached a village inhabited by Brahmanas,[2] who wore the sacred thread but who were given to music and dancing, having fallen from the Vēdic life.[3] Kōvalaṉ lodged the holy saint and his loving wife

1 She was well read in works of dharma. Evidently San- skrit learning had come to stay in the Tamil land much earlier than is generally supposed.

2 A community of Brahmanas, but coming low in the social hierarchy. They are said to be ambaṇavar who took to the pro- fession of acting and dancing. As they did not pursue their svadharma society regarded them as socially inferior. The position which the Brahmana held in society in the age of the Cankam classics is clear. There was the Vēdic Brahmana engaged in read- ing and teaching the Vēdas and also in performing Vēdic sacrifices. He evoked respect from every one. There was the laukīka Brahmana who strayed from the prescribed path and took to pro- fessions other than those enjoined by the law of the land. In the Akanāṉūṟu (st. 24) we have the expression vēḷappārppāṉ meaning Brahmana engaged in making bangles. Among the laukīkas come the ambaṇavar also. The term ūrpārppāṉ in South Indian Inscriptions is another reference to the laukika members of the Brahmana community. This only shows that in addition to the Vēdic Brahmanas there also existed Brahmanas who took to worldly professions, and to whom society did not give the

same status as that enjoyed by Vēdic Brahmanas.

3 Cf. Kuraḻveṇpā, 133-4.

in a harmless place; and crossing a fence of thorns, he passed along a great road in search of water for his morning ablutions. (On his way) he recalled the journey in that forest alongside his wife and sighed heavily like a bellows. His grief burnt within him. Even his form looked altered, and clouded the vision of Kauśikan[1], who, without recognizing him, addressed the green-leaved *kurukkatti* in whose shade he was standing: 'O *mātavi*[2] plant, with all thy flowers fallen down, unable to bear the heat of summer, thou seemest to be distressed, even like the flower-like Mātavi of long eyes who has fallen into deep affliction unable to bear Kōvalan's separation from her.'

Kōvalan who was listening to these words of the Brahmana Kauśikan asked, 'What

is it you are saying?' The young Kauśikan went up to him and exclaimed: 'There need be no more anxiety: I have found him.' He then narrated all that had happened in Pukār, as follows: his (Kōvalan's) wealthy father and pious mother are like a serpent that has lost its priceless jewel; his near relations have drowned themselves in an ocean of sorrow like bodies deprived of their souls; his servants have departed to different regions determined to find him out and bring him (Kōvalan) back; the very city of Pukār of ancient fame

1 The commentator interprets Kōśikan as Bandikōśikan. It may also be Bandakauśikan. Apparently this Brahmana belonged to the well-known Kauśika gōtra. The suffix māṇi in l. 56 shows that he was a bachelor and still in the first stage of life (āśrama). Both terms Kōśikan and Kauśikan are used.

2 Kurukkatti is paśalai or green leaves

the mātavi plant, and the reference to shows that the season was summer. The mātavi plant is compared to the courtesan Mātavi. The distress to the plant is caused by the departure of spring, and to the courtesan by the departure of Kōvalan.

has gone mad—like Ayōdhyā[1] at the separation of the great hero (Rāma) who (left it and) penetrated the thick jungles saying, 'To me the kingdom is nothing, but my father's command is everything';—Mātavi who heard (the news) from Vasantamālā's lips, lost her colour and turned green, and fell in a swoon upon the decorated bed in the bedchamber in the middle part of her tall mansion. Kauśikan then continued: 'Much moved by her extreme agony I went to console her,[2] when that

sorrow-stricken lady said: "I prostrate myself before your feet; kindly see that I suffer no more." She then wrote out a message with her tender hands and gave it to me saying, "Please hand this sealed palm-leaf[3] to him who is as dear to me as the jewel of my own eye." He, the performer of Vēdic sacrifices, concluded by saying that he went to several places aimlessly with that message.

He said all this in good faith, and placed in Kōvalaṉ's hands the leaf, given him by the grief-stricken creeper-like Mātavi, with the flowerbuds in her hair. The seal

1 The capital of Daśaratha, king of Ayōdhyā, presented a deserted appearance at the news of Rāma's entering the forest under the orders of his father. (See Rāmāyaṇa, 'Ayōdhyā', ch. 48.) This shows that the epic tradition of the Rāmāyaṇa had become popular in the Tamil land in the early centuries of the Christian era.

2 It was the Brahmana Kauśikaṉ who brought Mātavi's message to Kōvalaṉ. In those days it seems to have been a custom for Brahmanas to have free entry into the women's apart-

ments, and give succour to them whenever they needed aid. Also Brahmanas were sent on errands either for the state or on private business.

3 The message was written on a palm-leaf. It was sealed before it was handed over. It is known as *candirakam,* with an

ōla envelope to an ōla letter, shaped in the form of a ring. (See Tamil Lexicon, p. 1268.) That the sealing of letters was common is also evident.

reminded him of the fragrance of her tresses which she

had dressed with perfumed oil during his stay with her,

and he was therefore loath to break it open. But as he

opened the palm-leaf, he read these words :[1]

'My Lord, I fall prostrate before your feet. Kindly forgive my indiscreet words. What is my mistake which

made you leave (our city) during the night with your wife of noble birth, even without the knowledge of your parents? My mind suffers in ignorance. Please relieve me. O great and true one of exquisite wisdom, may you bless me!'

When he had read these words he felt, 'She is not in the wrong; I alone am to blame', and gave Kauśikan back (the message) as if to explain his departure, saying 'The contents of this sealed letter are quite fit to be seen by my faultless parents. I bow at their lotus-feet. O young Kauśikan, show it to them so that they may cease to be anxious about me and be free from their agony. Please go.'

Afterwards he went back to the place where the holy, righteous Kavunti was staying with his faultless and chaste wife, and there he joined the company of bards who were singing (in praise of) Durgā's valorous dance. He

took up the *sengoōṭṭi yāḻ*[2] and sounding the *sentiṟam*,[3] he

1 This is Mātavi's message. The implication is that she had done nothing to cause his final departure or separation from her. Even if she had committed a fault, she suggests that it was no greater than his own mistake in leaving his residence and city without the permission and knowledge of his aged parents. Her letter was so convincing that Kōvalaṉ thought it fit to redirect it to his parents to keep them informed of his situation.

2 One of the four kinds of yāḻ (see Intro., p. 61).

3 Śentiṟam constituted of paṉ (śampūraṇam), paṇṇiyaṟṟiṟam (ṣāḍavam), tiṟam (auḍavam) and tiṟattiṟam (caturttam). See

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fastened up *tantirikaram* and *tivavu*,o[1] joined properly *paṟṟu* with the existing *oṟṟuṟuppu*,[2] tied up the strings starting from *uḻai* and ending with *kaikkiḷai*, tested carefully with his ear the *āsāṉṟiṟam*[3] of *pāṭaṟpāṇi*[4] sacred to Durgā, at three places (*tāṉam*) according to well recognized convent tions;[5] and after playing the *pāṭaṟpāṇi* with those *pāṇar*, he asked them the distance from there to Madura (Kūṭal).

They replied: 'Do you not feel here the south wind blowing from Madura? It is mingled with the divinely fragrant, thin soft mixture made up of the black *akil* paste, the odorous *kunkumam* flower, civet, the excellent sandal- paste, and the paste made from the musk of deer. On its way it rests for a while in the newly-opened flower-buds of the pollen-laden

water-lily, maidenly *campakam*, *mātavi* petals, jasmine (*mallikai*), and home-grown *mullai*. It then mixes with the smoke rising from kitchens, the smoke of the broad bazaar where numbers of cooks fry cakes in pans, the fragrant fumes rising from terraces where live men and women, the smoke of sacrificial offerings, and various other sweet fumes. It finally issues with innumerable and indistinguishable odours from the palace of the conquering Pāṇṭyaṉ wearing (Indra's garland[6] on his broad chest,

1 Two of the six limbs of the śenkōṭṭi yāḻ.

2 Oṟṟu was a limb of the śenkōṭṭi yāḻ and oṟṟuṟuppu is probably a fret.

3 Four kinds of āśāṉ: Gāndāram, Śikaṇṭi, Daśākari, and Śuddagāndāram.

4 Here was a mixing up of paṇ and tiṟam. See above, canto vii, st. 24.

5 This clearly demonstrates that Kōvalaṉ was a master-

musician and was equal to experts in his knowledge of playing the lute.

6 For the tradition of the Pāṇṭyan wearing Indra's garland see above, canto xi, ll. 24-5.

and fills all places with its oppressive perfume. This is much unlike the south wind coming from the Potiyil hills, which is often praised by the unfaltering tongues of (Caṅkam) poets.[1] Therefore that prosperous city is not very far from here. Though you go alone, none will obstruct you.'[2]

Afterwards Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki began their journey by night, as previously, in company with the lady of great

penance.
On their way they heard the thundering sounds of the morning drum,[3] beaten with great eclat in the great temple of Śiva and other gods, and in the celebrated palace of the far-famed king; (they further heard) the chanting according to established rules by Brahmanas who knew the four Vēdas,[4] and the speech of penance-performers engaged in instruction. (They also heard) the

usual daily sound of the *muḻavu* in honour of the king's sword-warriors[5] who would not return from the field without victory, the uproar of war-elephants captured in battle, the screams of wild elephants

captured in the

1 The reference here is to Caṅkam poets who have sung the glories of the Potiyil in many a song. This establishes the antiquity of the Caṅkam as an institution regarded so even in the days of the Cilappatikāram.

2 This indicates the hospitality offered to aliens in ancien Madura.

3 Drums were usually beaten in the morning both in the temple and at the palace.

4 Vēdic chanting was usually heard everywhere in the mornings. Is it a reference to the chanting of Sattram-Yajur-Āruṇam?

5 This may be a reference to a festival of arms. The playing on muḻavu is said to be a daily function and is generally in honour

of soldiers who
of battle.

fought to the end without retreating from the field

forests, the neighing of horses standing in line, the beat of the *kiṇai* drums[1] at daybreak by dancing minstrels, and other tumultuous noises arising from Madura, all of which rivalled the roaring of the dark sea. These noises seemed to welcome the travellers and made them forget all their miseries.

The divine damsel, by name Vaikai, who is ever on the tongues of the poets, celebrated by them for her right conduct in offering protection to the world, and who belongs to the Pāṇṭyas, resembled a flawless noble[2] maiden with robes of different flowers[3] fallen from the date- palm, *vakuḷam*, red

cotton tree, *vēṅkai*, white *kaṭampam*, *nākam*, *tilakam*, *marutam*, jasmine, pear tree, the tall *cam- pakam*, and *pāṭalam*; with her banks the zone of her broad *alkul*, studded with *kuruku*, golden jasmine, *musuṇṭai* with thick creeper, blossoming wild jasmine (*atiral*), the white *kūtāḷam*, *kuṭasam*, *vediram*, luxuriant *pakaṉṟai* creepers, *piṭavam* and Arabian jasmine closely intermingled; flowery islets—being accumulations of sand, facing one against the other, and richly covered by many flower trees growing thickly on their sides—her young and beautiful breasts; the red flowery tree shedding its flowers on her banks, her red mouth, and the *mullais* brought by the current, her lovely teeth; the carps that frisked along,

1

Kiṉainilai is the theme of the song in praise of a Veḷḷāḷa chief to the accompaniment of a kiṇai drum. It was generally performed by dancing minstrels called kiṉaipporunar.

2 The term poyyā applied to the river means it was ever- flowing. And these waters prevented alien kings from entering the Pāṇṭyaṉ capital. It was a kind of nadīdurga or river-for- tress.

3 The river Vaikai is described as a lady, wearing flower- robes, her banks representing her girdle, islets her breasts, mullais her teeth, carps her

eyes, and the flowing water her wavy hair.

hiding and revealing themselves alternately, her long

eyes; the flowing water, never without odorous flowers,

her tresses.[1]

She (the Vaikai) covered herself with the holy robes

of sweet flowers and restrained the flow of tears that filled

her eyes[2] as if she knew the trouble in store for youthful

Kaṇṇaki.

Kaṇṇaki and Kōvalaṉ who had followed a foot-path

through the forest (reached the river and) praised it

extravagantly saying,[3] 'O this is no stream of waters,

but a stream of flowers.' They avoided the great

thronged landing-stages where all the different boats

were moored; some shaped like horses, some like

elephants and others like lions.[4] Instead, they crossed

over the river on a raft, accompanied by the saint, to

a fragrant grove full of beauteous flowers on the southern

bank.

They regarded it as an act of great merit to circum-ambulate the city, the dwelling-place of gods, and they went round the moat enveloped by the indestructible forest of defence.[5] At that time, the dark water-lily, *āmpal*, and the lotus, as if they understood for certain the unparalleled-

1 Aral may mean thin black sand, or flowing water. Both are generally compared to the curls of ladies' hair.

2 Here the Vaikai is compared to a lady sympathizing with Kaṇṇaki's future.

3 The river Vaikai was worshipped by the three travellers as the divine stream. Cf. Sītā worshipping the Ganges and other rivers when she was leaving for the Daṇḍaka forest.

4 Rafts of logs were also not uncommon. Evidently boat-building as an industry was in existence.

5 A forest which served as a defence surrounded the moat encircling the city fortress.

trouble in store for Kaṇṇaki and her husband, seemed to quake with grief (represented) by the waving of their stems[1] and their eyes filled with tears, while the bees that rested (in them) seemed to produce a mourning note in a spirit of sympathy. Lofty flags that[2] were set upon the outer wall of the fortress in commemoration of victory over enemies, seemed to say by a deprecating wave of hands 'Do not come (into the city).'

The travellers passed through fertile paddy

fields-filled with birds and groves and entered the suburbs of the ancient city-fortress,[3] inhabited by none other than the men practising *dharma*, with residential quarters intersected by streams of fresh floods, lakes of expansive waters, fruit- bearing coconuts, plantain trees, areca palms, and bam- boo sheds[4] for supplying water.

1 Their shaking is caused by the wind waving their stems,

and the tears are drops of honey.

2 The capture of the flags of the victory. After capture they were usually

enemy was a sign of
fixed on the outer wall

of the fortress. The flag waving its hands means that the wind blew against it and thus seemed to urge the travellers to go back.

3 The suburbs near the forest wall (purañcēri) were the

residential quarters of the penance-performers, ascetics and other sādhus.

4 This shows that rest-houses were erected at important places for travellers and the chief material used for such buildings was bamboo. Cf. Aśōka's inscriptions where this emperor is said to have built rest-houses on the roads.

C—23

CANTO XIV

URKAN KATAI

OR

SEEING THE CITY

To the singing of birds in the suburban groves, in the tracts of shining water, and in the paddy fields bent with the weight of crops, the sun, an object of worship by the whole world, made the lotus in the lake open its petals, and awoke to the morning half-light the inhabitants of lofty Madura of the Pāṇṭyan who held the sword that made his enemy's heads tremble. At that time the thunder of the morning drum rose high accompanied by the blowing of the white conch from the temples[1] of Śiva with the forehead eye, of Vishṇu with the Garuḍa standard, of Baladēva with the plough, and of Subrahmaṇya with the cock-flag, and from the residences[2] of those proclaiming *dharma,*[3] as well as from the palace of the victorious king.[4]

1 Cf. Maṇi., canto v, l. 54.

2 The terms used in the text to denote a temple are kōil, niyamam, nakaram, koṭṭam and paḷḷi. The last term, paḷḷi is invariably used in connexion with Jaina temples.

3 Cf. Maṇi., canto i, ll. 54-5. For an explanation of the term aṟatturai see Kuraḷveṇpā 41, et seq. The tuṟai of tuṟavaram constitutes carya, kriya, yōga and jñānam: the means of attaining yoga are eightfold. (See Tolk., 'Puratt.', sūtra 20 and the commentary of Naccinārkkiniyar thereon).

4 The tuṟai of maṟam is sevenfold: veṭci, karantai, vañci,

kāñci, nocci, uḻiñai, and tumpai. See Pura., veṇpāmālai. The

reference here is to seven kinds of conquest. Cf. Studies in Tamil Literature and History, pp. 239-42.

Kōvalan went to make obeisance with his hands to the saint Kavunti and said:[1] 'O saint distinguished for great penance, as one who has strayed from the righteous path, I am in the abject condition of seeing this girl, tender as a flower, suffer great pain by wandering through unknown lands. Until I return after informing the princely merchants[2] of this ancient city about my situation, this lady of mine will be under your protection.[3] Have you any objection to that, O holy saint?'

To this Kavunti replied: 'Because your good deeds in past births are exhausted, you and your lady-love now experience unequalled distress. Though virtuous men proclaim eloquently with the drumstick of their tongues on the drum of their mouths, "Avoid the path of unrighteousness; if not,

it will lead to bitter reaction,"
still those who are by nature bad will not take this precept to heart. But when an evil deed brings its own reaction, they become maddened excessively by misery born of igno- rance. On the other hand wise and learned people will not grieve when the unavoidable reaction of past *karma* shows itself.

'The suffering at parting from one's love, the suffering leading to the union of lovers, and the suffering caused by the formless god (Cupid) visit only those who enjoy the love of curly-headed maidens, and not sages who lead a life of celibacy. Many in the world have fallen into dire distress by regarding women and food as objects of plea- sure, and seeing this, sages have relinquished the desire for

1 A confession by Kōvalan̲ of his guilt.

2 Literally, Vaiśyas next in rank to the Kṣatriya caste.

3 Here Kōvalan̲ seems to imply that Kaṇṇaki was under the protection of Kavunti and was to continue so.

already

both. Not only now but many times in the past man has

been entrapped by the wiles of a love based on desire and

endless suffering.

Do you not know that he[1] who went

with his wife (into the forest) on the command of his father

(Daśaratha) and suffered great agony at her (subsequent)

separation, was the father of Him who revealed the

Vēdas?[2] Is it not a long-remembered fact?

'He (Naḷa) lost his kingdom in a gambling court[3] and

penetrated the deep forest in company with his tender wife.[4] Neither was he devoid of love for her, nor was she a woman of bad and low nature. Was not Fate hard that he went away in the dead of night leaving her in the wild jungle?[5] Can you say that any accused her (Damayantī) of any fault? You are not like them, for have you not enjoyed union with your pretty wife? Do not grieve: but go to the king's city, 'Madura, and return when you have found a suitable (dwelling) place.'

Kōvala̱n then went through a street above a narrow passage (*suranga*)[6] constructed to admit groups of ele-

1 Another statement to demonstrate that the

Rāmāyaṇa was well known in South India at this time.

2 This refers to the legend that when Vishṇu was engaged in yōganidrā Brahmā the Creator came out of his navel. Hence Brahmā was the son of Vishṇu and was the giver of the Vēdas.

3 Vallāḍāyam (Sans., dyūtam).

4 The reference is to the story of Naḷa and Damayanti, which is the theme of the Naiṣadha Kāvya,

5 Naḷa left Damayantī in the forest in a half-naked condition in the dead of night (Mhb., 'Vana Parvan,' ch. 62). This also shows that the story of the Mahābhārata was popular in the Tamiḷ land (see 'Naḷōpākhyānaparvan' for the full story).

6 It may be remembered that this word śuranga is important as determining the authenticity of the

Arthaśāstra. See The Mauryan Polity, pp. 16-17.

phants with their long trunks, leading from the moat with its vast expanse of sparkling waters, encircled by a well-guarded defence forest.[1] Unsuspected by the ranks of the best Yavana swordsmen[2] who guarded it, he next entered the forest-gate, where flags waved in the westerly breeze and saw the interior (of the city) glittering like the opened jewel-box of thousand-eyed Indra.

In the streets[3] he saw courtesans, lost to all shame and chastity, accompanying their rich lovers to the pleasure garden with its tall *maruta* trees[4] on the banks of the swelling Vaikai, and on white sand dunes. He also saw them engaged in water-sports, in boats with high cabins and in canoes, swimming and holding on to the rafts.[5]

He saw, besides, in a

grove of the ancient city which appeared like a golden creeper, courtesans gracefully placing cool fragrant *mullais*, water-lilies, and *neytals* with

1 Iḷai is the defensive wall of a fortress and miḷai is the forest zone encircling the moat surrounding a citadel.

2 Aṭiyārkkunallār speaks of them as Turks. It may possibly be a reference to Greeks. But to the natives of ancient India all foreigners were Yavanas. They were employed by for military service.

Tamil kings

3 A description of the interior of the city. The rest of the canto shows Kōvalaṉ going through the principal streets.

4 It would appear that there was a special place which went by the name of tirumarutanturai. The Kalittokai also makes a reference to it. These reference show that that place was a public park. See Maturaikkāñci, l. 356.

5 Boats and rafts of different descriptions were used to cross the rivers. The names given are nirmāḍam, nāvāi, and puṇai. Some of them were covered and some open. The puṇai was an open raft. People either swam holding on to it or they sat on it and crossed.

open petals in their hair which was already dressed with long wreaths of white flowers, jasmine, *viriyal*, and the pollen of the cool red lily; and fastened with pearls from the great harbour of Korkai.[1] (They were further seen) anointing their bodies with luxurious sandal-paste from the southern Malaya hills.

At
beds in

nightfall he saw maidens on their flower-strewn the moonlit terraces where their lovers banished

their fatigue (by recalling
ent seasons of the year).[2]

their experiences in the differ-
(During the rainy season, they

said,) when
north wind,

the king, of the clouds appeared with the
decorated the noisy city of Madura in red

(*cevvaṇi*),[3] and showed to her (Madura) the king of Gods (Indra) who had clipped the wings of mountains with his

1 Koṟkai was one of the great ports of that time. It was noted for excellent pearl-fisheries. See Maturaikkāñci, ll. 134 and 144. Probably Ptolemy's Kolkhoi was Koṟkai (McCrindle, op. cit., p. 57 ff.). The site of this town is now about five miles inland, where a new emporium arose. This was the Kayal of Marco Polo who visited it in the thirteenth century. (See Travels of Marco Polo, ed. by Sir Henry Yule, Vol. II., pp. 372-3.) There is a clear reference to the pearls and to the port in the Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra.

2 The poet describes the life led by men and women in the city during the six different seasons of the year—the rainy season,

the cold season, the season of early dew, the

season of late dew, spring and summer. These are known in Sanskrit as Varṣaṛtu, Śiśiṛtu, Hēmantaṛtu, Śaratṛtu, Vasantam, and Grīṣmam. When Kōvalaṉ entered the city it was the middle of summer.

3 Cevvaṇi is a term of much importance in Akapporuḷ. If during his wife's menstrual period the hero spent his time with a courtesan, the custom was for the confidante to appear before him dressed entirely in red. The hero then returned home. Perhaps Iḷanko took Madura to be the confidante, Indra to be the hero, and the women of Madura to be the heroines.

thunderbolt,[1] they (the ladies of the city) wore in their waists scarlet silk with flower-work thereon, adorned their

tresses (already dressed with flower-buds) with wild olive; adorning them further with the fragrant and fresh-blown *kuṟiñci* and red *tāḷi* flowers which grew on the slopes of the Cirumalai hills. (They then) painted their breasts wiih red sandal-paste, and further beautified them with garlands of coral, and garlands of the curved petals of red *Ceṅkōṭu* flowers.

During the cold season modest damsels and their lovers, who had painted their chests with fragrant pastes, seated themselves in front of the censer charged with the wood of incense trees, and closed the lattice windows[2] (of their apartments) in mansions seeming to reach the sky, built by expert architects.[3]

During the season of early dew, ladies sat with their lovers on the moonlit terraces of their big houses, to receive the warmth of the rising sun, who appeared with his expanding rays on the southern horizon dispelling the white clouds.

1 This legend is well known in Sanskrit literature. Tradition has it that mountains once had wings and consequently flew from one place to another. Then Indra had their wings clipped. Some of them in fear hid themselves in the deep waters of the ocean. See the Rāmāyaṇa, 'Sundara', ch. 1.

2 These were windows peculiar to those days. See Studies in Tamil Literature and History, pp. 263-4. It is of absorbing interest to note similar institutions in the Indus Valley during the chalcolithic period. In the Annual Report, 1928-9 of the Archaeological Survey of India, the remark is made that no windows have been discovered in the Mohenjo-daro buildings excavated. 'In all probability there were only simple ventilation holes just beneath the ceilings of the rooms.'—Report, p. 69.

3 Arumpatavuraiyāsiriyār refers to a treatise on architecture entitled Mayamatam.

(The lovers continued to talk, asking) where is the king (the season) of late dew in the month Paṅkuni, who would witness the festival of the Bow sacred to hard-hearted Cupid (Neṭuvēḷ)[1] in the Pāṇṭyan city and enter with the east wind and with a fleet of high, broad ships, carrying different kinds of incense, silks, sandals, scents, and camphor brought as tribute, from Toṇṭi?[2]

Moreover, where else can we see the king of spring,

who unites joyful lovers in the Pāṇṭyan city, bringing with him the south wind from the Potiyil hills of Tennavan, giving *mātavi* creepers luxuriant growth and filling groves and jungles with fragrant flowers?

In this way creeper-like ladies rested with their husbands recalling the different seasons.

(Continuing, they said) on the last day when the king of spring reigning over Madura considered removing to other places, the continuously hot sun and the westerly breeze, entered (the city) and scorched the entire jungle

1 Vilviḷa is the festival in honour of the God of Love. Neṭuvēḷ, literally, means 'The Great Vēḷ' or one who kindles eternal desire. The festival is generally held in the month of Paṅkuni in the season of late dew. In the Tamil land the festival is still celebrated in that month. See Kuṟuntokai, st. 31.

2 This Toṇṭi must have been a great port, belonging to the Cōḷa, or more probably the Pāṇṭyan kingdom. This must not be confused with Toṇṭi, another port in the dominion of the Cēras. See Puṟam., st. 17 and 48. The tribute offered by the chief of Toṇṭi in ships was akil, silks, garlands, scents, and camphor. Most of these came from the Archipelago islands in the east. For detailed comments on these articles see the gloss of Aṭiyārkkunallār. The Cilappatikāram says that ships entered with koṇṭal or the east wind. If it is a reference to Cēra Toṇṭi, koṇṭal would not have been mentioned. Perhaps this Toṇṭi can be identified with a place of the same name in the present Ramnad district.

and hilly tracts, making herds of elephants and their young

ones tremble; wealthy maidens (wearing golden bangles)

completely loyal to the king, embraced him anew and

received from him as presents covered carts, palanquins,

sleeping-couches with jewelled legs, physical happiness in

the pleasure-gardens,[1] *kauri* fans of yaks'

tails, golden betel-boxes, and sharp swords. These maidens drank sweet wine from pure golden goblets held by their maid-servants and became inebriated. When trying to drive away with their fragrant flower-garlands striped bees[2] (that had settled on them), they hit places where the bees were not. In smiling they showed their pear-like teeth through their red lips and sang words of praise which they had not sung during their separation (*pulavi*); but when they began the eight modes of singing,[3] their tongues failed and provoked only laughter in their hearers. The extremities of their long carplike eyes, red like the opened

buds of a bright *Ceṅkaḻunīr* flower, bespoke their anger, while perspiration gathered on their tiny foreheads, bearing the *tilaka*, and their murderous bow-like eye-brows curved downwards, all of which was longingly observed by men of noble families. In this way these women afforded amusement to the ruler of the earth.

1 Tam., uyyāṉam; Sans., udyāna. This refers to the king's concubines to whom he occasionally made presents, such as those mentioned.

2 The women drank so much that their eyes became reddened and deceived the bees into thinking that they were not eyes but honey-laden flowers.

3 Kaṭṭurai constitutes eight kinds of song

if the reading is எட்டுக்கு. But the reading எடுக்கும் may be conveniently substituted. It would then mean that they tried to speak but their words stuck in their throats.

(After passing this street) Kōvalan went through the highway with its double row of[1] beautiful mansions which crowned kings frequented secretly. These were the residences of courtesans who had never been punished with the carrying of burnt tiles,[2] and of dancers who knew the technique of the two musical conventions, *vēttiyal* and *potuviyal*[3] and had perfect knowledge of the four[4] characteristics (of dancing),[5] songs, of bagpipes accompanied by musical time-beats, the music

·instruments made of leather used in the dancing theatre. They also knew of the much renowned *talaikkōl* and of the sweet and seven- fold strains, and were accompanied by the *tōriyamaṭanṭai*[6] who sang the *vāram*, by the girl who sang the opening song and by the girl who sang the middle song and who

1 The double rows are probably śirutaṉam (residences of the middle classes) and perutaṉam (residences of the wealthy classes).

2 This may mean that they were living in lofty houses built of burnt bricks and tiles. Another meaning (adopted here) is that the courtesans were free from the punishment of bearing tiles. The custom was to inflict this punishment on anybody who swerved from the prescribed conventions. The damsel had to

walk round the city in procession bearing seven tiles on her head.

To this disgrace the courtesans of Madura were not subjected.

3 Both these are known as Vacaikkūttu. See Maṇi., canto ii, i, 18. While vēttiyal was intended for royalty, potuviyal was a popular performance (see Arumpatavurai).

4 The paṇ was fourfold, pālai, kuriñci, marutam and śevvaḷi.

5 Vari is of seven kinds. It may also refer to the seven strings beginning with kural.

6 The tōriyamaṭantai was an aged dancing girl who sung the vāram to the accompaniment of a dance by a young girl. She was assisted by two more girls, talaippāṭṭukkūtti initiating the song, and the iṭaippāṭṭukkūtti helping in the middle by singing.

acted in four different entertaining ways, and (when sing- ing) reached the eighth (note) for which she was rewarded every day with gifts ranging from one to 1008 *kaḻañcus* of gold.

Caught in the eye-nets of these goddess-like damsels
(*aṇaṅku*),[1] even religious men, take leave of their disciplin-
ed senses, while young people dallying carnally with girls
like bees sucking honey from flower after flower, and new
initiates to the revelries of Cupid, will not leave those
mansions, without listening to the girls' songs, and to the
parrot-like talk of the women skilled in the sixty-four
arts.[2]

Kōvalaṉ then saw in the bazaar,[3] covered carts and

other vehicles,[4] ornamented chariots, coats of mail, attrac-
tive goads, gloves used in warfare, efficacious medicines,
curved bludgeons, white furry fans, pig-faced shields,
leather shields, shields with a picture of the forest on them,
machines fitted with spears,[5] workers in copper, bronze-
workers, newly-made ropes, garland-makers, saws made of
steel, instruments for ivory cutting, burning incense

1 Aṇaṅku corresponds here to the Mōhinī of Sanskrit Literature.

2 The sixty-four arts are elaborately given in the Kāmasūtr. of Vātsyāyana.

3 What we call kaṭangu streets in modern Indian cities. These are shops of wholesale dealers. Four such

are mentioned.

4 It may be
noted that these vehicles were all drawn by
bullocks.

5 A number of instruments of war are
mentioned here as
being sold in open bazaars. The instruments for
ivory cuttings
flower-work, the decorative arts, etc., show
the high state of
culture reached in the early centuries of the

Christian era.

(*pukai*),[1] pastes, and flower-work, which were
so rich and innumerable that they even evoked the
envy of monarchs.

Kōvalan next passed through the wealthy street unpenetrated by enemies, full of groups of dealers in superior diamonds[2] which were free from such defects as crows' feet, spots, holes and lines, which had no natural deficiencies observable by experts of trained acuteness, and which reflected the colours of the four castes.[3] Emeralds

of green brilliance free from black spots and defects of line and curve; the *māṇikkam* variety known as *patumam*, *nilam*, *bindu*, and *spaṭikam*, all of which were free from recognized defects; the *pusparāga* set with gold resembling a cat's eye; the beautiful sardonyx (*gōmēdaga*) with the faultless brilliance of the sun; the blue gem with crystallized darkness; the double-coloured *vaidūrya*;[4] the good gems of five different kinds born from a common source[5] and glimmering like the setting sun, as well as heaps of white pearls (*candrāguru*), pink-lustred pearls (*angāraka*)[6]

1 Pukai stands for all the varieties of burning incense used at that ancient time.

2 Experts in the art of cutting gems. The nine kinds of precious stones are mentioned. Aṭiyārkkunallār furnishes interesting details as regards their superiority and fineness as well as of the defects of each one of them.

The commentator's study is scientific and deserves close scrutiny.

3 The colours of four castes, white, red, green and black are distinguished in the diamonds.

4 The interpretation of Arumpatavurai is followed in ll. 189-90. What this Āśiriyār, interprets as gōmēdaga, Aṭiyārkku-nallār interprets as Vaidūrya, and vice versa.

5 The common source of some of the gems was crystal quartz.

6 It is interesting to note that some of the pearls are named after the planets sōma, guru, and angāraka.

and pearls of the finest quality (*āṉimuttu*),[1] all of which sparkled without any blemish caused by wind or sand, stone or water. There were also well-formed corals completely free from flaws in their inner cavities, without stones in their interspaces, and untwisted.[2]

The excellent streets of the goldsmiths were next seen with flags[3] enabling the gold-dealers to avoid confusion as to the kind of gold available in each shop variously called *jātarūpa*, *kiḷiccirai* (parrot's wings), *āṭakam* and *jāmbū- nadam.*

He then went through the street of cloth merchants, where several kinds of bundles were piled up, each of a hundred cloths woven of cotton thread, hair, or silk thread;[4] the street of corn-chandlers where merchants were seen going about here and there with balances, measuring-vessels known as *paṟai*, and grain-measures (*ambaṇam*),[5] filled with sacks[6] of grain and black pepper

1 Aṭiyārkkunallār interprets ll 195-6 as follows: 'Pearls of the round sort, their natural colour white (veḷḷi) and pink (angāraka).

2 The defects and merits of corals are furnished here. One defect is that during the course of its growth, stones entered into the interspaces. Such corals were considered inferior.

3 Four kinds of gold were offered for sale and in front of each shop hung a flag—the signpost indicative of the kind of gold available within.

4 Clothes were made from cotton, rat's hair, silk thread, see Cīvakacintāmaṇi, st. 2686.

5 For ambaṇavaḷavai, see Patiṟṟu., p. 66, 2nd. ed. It was a grainmeasure equal to the modern marakkāl. Paṟai was another measuring-vessel in use.

6 The word grain, according to the commentator, stands for sixteen kinds of grains grouped in bags in the streets. One of them was pepper.

irrespective of the seasons; the four different streets occupied by the men of the four castes;[1] the intersection of three streets;[2] the termini of four streets;[3] the streets of petty shops; *maṉṟams*; lanes and broad streets; and finally went beyond the ramparts (of the city) through the shade of an arbour[4] of clustering green leaves, impervious to the fierce rays of the sun blazing in the sky. Seeing thus the great city of the protecting (Pāṇṭyaṉ) king, Kōvalaṉ was highly pleased.

1 There were caste streets as distinguished from other streets of

the city, where lived artisans and other classes pursuing different arts and crafts.

2 The term used generally is candi, sometimes, muccanti.

3 The catukkam was also known as nārcanti.

4 According to the commentator, the shade of the numerous flags and festoons offered shelter to the passer-by. But this does not seem quite appropriate, since Kōvalaṉ went outside the rampart from the interior of the city.

Canto XV

ATAIKKALAK KATAI

OR

THE HAVEN

HAVING seen the ancient and great city of Madura dis- tinguished for the highly righteous sceptre, the coolness of the (royal) umbrella, and the prowess of the spear of the Kauriyar[1] who dutifully turned the wheel of law under the merciful guidance of a bountiful providence,[2] and never deserted by its law-abiding citizens,[3]

Kōvalan went outside

1 Among the titles given to the Pāṇṭya, one is Kauriyar. The two terms Pāṇṭyan and Kauriyar which occur in Caṅkam literature strongly suggest that they are derived from Pāṇṭu and Kuru. We know of the Pāṇṭavas and Kauravas as foster-brothers fighting the great war recounted in the Mahābhārata, at ancient Kurukṣētra. Both belonged to one and the same stock. Apparently a branch of this stock was established in the extreme south of India and became prominent among South Indian dynas- ties. But there is evidence suggesting an indigenous origin to this dynasty as the present writer has ventured to conjecture in a footnote in his Studies in Tamil Literature and History, p. 179. The subject requires further examination and scrutiny.

2 It means there was no hunger, disease, theft or trouble from neighbours (see canto v, st. 72).

3 The idea is that the king was such

a just monarch that the

people of the city never thought of leaving it for a foreign land. It may be noted in passing that it was a custom in ancient India for the people to forsake

their kings if they conducted themselves unrighteously, by deserting their capital for that of other and more just kings.

See the Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra. Bk. XIII, § 1.

This seems to have been an effective weapon on the

part of the

the gates of the fortress, into the grove wherein dwelt monks engaged in imparting *dharma*.

And while he was narrating to the sage Kavunti the undiminishing prosperity of Madura and the prowess of the Pāṇṭyaṉ king, Māṭalaṉ of Talaicceṅkāṉam,[1] the first amongst Brahmanas, well versed in the four Vēdas appeared at their residence in the grove surrounded by a shallow moat. He had come there to obtain relief from the fatigue of his journey while returning to his own family, after circumambulating the hill[2] sacred to the great sage, and bathing in the bathing

ghat of the Kumari.

To him Kōvalaṉ prostrated himself, while the Brah- mana skilled in speech,[3] on being addressed, replied as follows:

'When Mātavi, tender as the young mango-leaf, after winning the king's gift[4] for dancing, gave birth to a tender

subjects to make the king conduct himself justly and truly towards them.

1 Talaiccenkāṉam is Talaiccenkāṭu, a village of the ancient Cōḷa kingdom, perhaps identical with the village now bearing that name about six miles south-west of Kāvērippaṭṭiṉam. It is a sacred place mentioned in the Tēvāram.

2 Potiyil, sacred to the sage Agastya. For the Agastya tradition in the South and Greater India, the reader's attention is Dikshitar's Some Aspects of the Vāyu Purāṇa (Madras Univer-

sity, 1933), in the section entitled 'Agastya and Greater India.'

See also K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's 'Agastya', in Tijdschrift Van Ind., Vol LXXVI, No. 4.

3 This special attribute given by the poet Māṭalan shows that the latter was famous for his oratorical powers.

4 The Cōla king under reference who had given Mātavi a special gift for dancing is identified by the commentator Aṭiyārkku-

babe and passed through the period of pollution,[1] you responded to the sweet words appropriate to the occasion of the older dancers who desired that the daughter should be given a fitting name, by saying. "An ancestor of mine[2] was once shipwrecked in the dead of night in the great sea of mighty waves; but because he had performed several good deeds, he kept himself afloat by swimming for some days.[3]

Then appeared
before him the deity of the sea[4] saying, 'I live here under orders from Indra. I have come before you. Be not afraid; my name is Maṇimēka- lai.[5]
The fruits of your great charity are not lost. Sur- mount the great ocean of your suffering'; and thus she saved him from his distress by bringing him back to the shore. As she is my family deity, let her name be given

nallār as Karikāla. But the latest researches point to a some- what different conclusion. (See P. T. S. Iyengar's History of the Tamils, pp. 372 ff; K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's Studies in Cōḷa History and Administration, pp. 19 ff.; M. Raghava Aiyangar's Cēran Ceṅguṭṭuvan, 3rd ed., pp. 101 ff.; and K. N. Sivaraja Pillai's The Chronology of the Early Tamils, pp. 88 ff.)

1 Evidently the observance of rules regarding pollution during the period of confinement was an ancient Tamil practice.

2 Cf. Maṇi., canto vii, ll. 33-8; canto xxix, l. 19. See Dikshitar's paper 'Buddhism in Tamil

Literature' in Buddhist Studies (Calcutta), edited By B. C. Law, p. 679, for a fuller version of the story.

3 'Some day's may be taken to be 'seven days' in the light of the text in the Maṇimēkalai, canto xxix, l. 16.

4 This story has a parallel in the Buddhist Jātaka stories. See E. B. Cowell, Jātakas, Vol. IV, pp. 9-13; Vol. VI, Nos. 442 and 539, p. 22.

5 Maṇimēkalai, the guardian deity of the sea, was the family deity of Kōvalan.

to this baby.'' Then a thousand courtesans with jewelle girdles blessed the child with the name Maṇimēkalai.[1]

'On that day when you sat with that happy lady Mātavi, and showered gifts of gold with your beautiful hands, a Brahmana, with bent body, having attained the very limits of

knowledge and good conduct,[2] came feebly along with the aid of a stick in order to receive gifts. Seeing him in the clutches of a fast and furious elephant which had thrown its mahout and was rushing in all directions to the loud noise of the drum,[3] O merciful hero, you stepped forth instantly with a cry, and after rescuing that man of high birth, you released yourself from its curved hollow trunk and remaining between the white tusks, stood on its nape like a Vidyādhara on a dark hill, and curbed the still furious beast.

'On another occasion, a Brahmana left for the north abandoning his wife who had caused the death of a young mungoose.[4] When she followed him, the Brahmana said:
"It is not proper for me to eat food served by your hands.

1 The ceremony of naming a child, still current in India as nāmakaraṇam, was one of the many

samskāras specially incum- bent on the twice-born classes. We know from literature that Kōvalan was a Vaiśya and hence belonged to the class of the twice-born.

2 The śiṣṭa according to Sanskrit didactic literature.

3 It seems to have been a peculiar ancient custom in Tamil India that when an elephant became must and went rampaging through the streets, a drum was sounded so as to be heard throughout the city warning citizens of the mad elephant's movements.
This kept people within doors lest they should fall victims to the beast.

4 For this folk-tale see the Pañcatantra.
See also Dik- shitar's paper on 'Folklore and the Migration of Legends' in the Annals of the

Bhandarkar Research Institute, 1934, pp. 212-19.

You give this note containing a Sanskrit verse[1] to people leading a virtuous life." With this the Brahmana lady went through the bazaars

where the tall mansions of the wealthy merchants were, and showed the note from house to house proclaiming, "O, will no one relieve me of my sins and enjoy the fruits of so doing?" At once you called to her and asked, "What is your trouble and what is this (note)?" The lady narrated to you the great dis- tress she was in, and said, "Take this leaf on which has been written the verse, and by giving me money absolve me from my great sin." You replied to her, "Do not fret, do not be afraid. I shall relieve you of your diffi- culty"; and in order that her sinful deed might be atoned for, you made gifts in accordance with the instituted rules,[2] and relieved that lady of her worry. O wealthy

1 The śloka quoted by Aṭiyārkkunallār is from the Pañca- tantra, Bk. V. Tale 1, and is as follows:

Aparikṣya na kartavyam kartavyam suparikṣitam |

Paścāt bhavati santāpō brāhmaṇi nakulam yathā ||

The context shows that the story occurred in Pukār during the lifetime of Kōvalaṉ. But as it finds mention in an earlier text like Tantrākhyāyika, an earlier recension of the Pañcatantra, this raises a great chronological difficulty. One way out of this tangle is to consider it a later interpolation. Whether or not the story be true, it bears testimony to the fact that Kōvalaṉ possessed a sound knowledge of Sanskrit. Apparently the note was a cadjan leaf on which had been written the verse by the Brahmana.

2 Belief in expiatory rites shows that the influence of the Dharmasūtras and Dharmaśāstras had gained ground in the Tamil land. This indicates the charitable nature of Kōvalaṉ' and also that Kōvalaṉ's wealth was limitless. In this connexion the term uṟuporul is interesting. According to the Kuṟaḷveṇpā 756, it is the unclaimed property that went to fill the coffers of the king.

But Kōvalaṉ could not have unclaimed property. Hence it is

man of imperishable riches! Then you made her husband, who had left for the forest,

(come back and) live with her in the right path (of household life) by giving them copious wealth out of your limitless riches.

'On still another occasion, a chaste lady was falsely accused. A man who went to her husband and gave false evidence was seized by the cruel noose of a Būtam, who devoured such offenders.[1] Seeing the deep sorrow of the mother of that erring man, you at once entered the knots of that noose and said to the gracious and good Būtam, "Take away my life and yield him his". Without agreeing, it said, "There is no prescription to accept a good life in the place of a bad life, lest I should lose thereby the enjoyment of the next world. Please give up the idea". When the Būtam had devoured him in your presence, O best among householders, you accompanied that lady, grief-stricken at heart, and like a close relative, prevented for several years the exhaustion of hunger which would have overtaken his family[2] and all its cognate branches.

correct to accept Tolkāppiyaṉār's interpretation of 'much' or 'copious'.

1 This points to the prevalent practice of punishing false witnesses with death. Cf. Kuṟuntokai, st. 184. It is interesting to note that the Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra rules to that effect. But the method of meting out this punishment is rather strange. There was the Būtam whose function it was to punish with death all who committed heinous offences. It would not accept a good life for a bad one. In fact the Būtam had no power to do so. See also canto v, ll. 128 and 134.

2 Dāyādins of Sanskrit literature. This also demonstrates the existence of the joint-family system in the Tamil land, and how there was a vast family of dependents on a single earning member, and how after his death, wealthy neighbours volunteered to give succour.

ATAIKKALAK KATAI

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'I know all the good things you have done in this

birth,[1] but owing to your deeds in the past birth, O Gōpāla[2]
of ripe knowledge, you have fallen into indescribable
suffering along with your gem-like young wife who is like
Lakṣhmi herself.'

To this Kōvalaṉ replied, 'Half awake in the middle of
the dark night I dreamt thus :[3] "Through a low person in
this city, well defended by the righteous monarch, this
girl with the five plaits of fragrant hair suffered great
agony; stripped of my robes by some stranger I mounted
a horned buffalo. Later in the company of this handsome
lady of the charmingly curled hair, I attained the great
status[4] of those who have renounced

attachment. I also
saw Mātavi yielding her daughter Maṇimēkalai to a
Buddhist saint of great glory,[5] thereby making the god
of love fling his flower dart on the barren ground and sob
helpless."

'I anticipate some imminent trouble.'

1 Cf. Kuṟaḷveṇpā, 169, and the commentary of Parimēla-
ḻakar.

2 Gōpāla seems to be the Sanskrit variant to the Tamil
name Kōvalaṉ.

3 Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar refers to the treatise entitled
Kaṉānūl, discovered and published for the first time in Sentamil,
Vol. I, Pt. III, and subsequently published as a booklet by
Vidvan R. Raghava Aiyangar. A parallel may be drawn from

the Rāmāyaṇa, 'Ayōdhya', ch. 59, where Bharata dreams a fearful dream during the night of Daśaratha's death, the latter riding in a southerly direction, in a chariot yoked with asses. Cf. Kaṉāṉūl, st. 2, 4, 10 and 15; Puṟam., st. 41; Kuṟaḷveṇpā, 247.

4 He obtained salvation which was generally secured only by men of detachment from mundane things. This means that the bondage of birth and death ceased to exist for him.

5 See Maṇi., canto ii, ll. 73-4, etc.

Then the Vēdic Brahmana and the saint Kavunti together observed: 'As this place outside the city[1] is not fit to be lived in except by righteous monks, leave here for the interior of the vast city, to the residences of Vaiśyas[2] who will receive you because of your past reputation.

Leave this place before sunset and enter the city of Madura with its tall mansions.'

Just then, Mātari, an old woman of the cowherd caste, who was returning after making the usual offering of milk to the flower-eyed yakkiṉi.[3] enshrined outside the city gates in the quarters of monks practising *dharma*, saw and prostrated herself before the saint Kavunti who then thought within herself: 'The life of cowherds who protect cows and offer what they yield is not harmful.[4] This aged lady is without fault and is, besides, virtuous

1 Puṟaccirai are the quarters outside the gates of the city, being the residences of those who dedicate themselves to a life of holiness and detachment and consequently householders are unfit to live in them.

2 Vaiśyas are said to be next in rank to the Kṣatriyas.

3 Yakṣī-dēvatā. Dr Swaminatha Aiyar in a

note informs us

that in the Jaina books, every one of the twenty-four Tirthan-

karas was served by a Yakka and Yakkiṉi. This name is current

as Iśakki in places round about Cape Comorin. Aṭiyārkkunallār interprets it as āriyānkaṉai, and on the authority of the Tiruviḷai-

yāṭal Purāṇam, st. 63, l. 17, āriyānkaṉai, is one who takes to

asceticism during the life-time of her husband. Her shrine was

situated outside the city proper (puṟacciṟai). But we know from

history and legends as testified to by the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahā-

vamśa that the Yakṣas were one of the early ruling tribes in

ancient South India and Ceylon, and died out some time before

the commencement of the Christian era.
4

This testifies to the simple and god-fearing life

led by members of the community of cowherds,

and merciful. It is not therefore wrong to lodge Kaṇṇaki
with Mātari.'
She then addressed Mātari thus: 'Listen! If mer-
chants of this city hear the name of this lady's father-in-
law,[1] they will welcome him (her husband) as a guest,
as if they had received a rare fortune, and take him and
this lady of the beaming-eyes to their well-guarded home[2]
along with them. Till she goes to the houses of those
very rich people, accept her, O cowherdess, as a refugee.
Give this auspicious girl an excellent bath, decorate her
long red eyes with black collyrium, adorn her soft tresses
with choice flowers, deck her in pure

clothes and as be-
comes worthy people, remain as her maid, protectress and
mother. Accept her. Mother Earth had no compassion[3]
on the tender tread of this creeper-like girl, who came
with me. Oblivious of her own suffering this celebrated
lady, although fainting from thirst in the scorching sun,
felt more keenly the suffering of her husband. We
(Kavunti) have not seen any shining deity other than this
goddess who has taken the vow of chastity necessary to
devoted housewives. Do you not know the truth of the
good saying that in a land where chaste women live, rains
will not fail,[4] prosperity will not decrease,

and the great monarch's victory will not diminish?

1 This shows that Mācāttuvāṉ's name was well known to the merchants of Madura. It would appear that he was a princely merchant.

2 This points to the fact that the houses of wealthy merchants were under watch and ward, and this is not surprising considering the stories of expert thieves given in the classic itself.

3 In simple language it means that she was footsore. And yet in spite of this she felt for her husband's distress and not her own.

4 Cf. Kuraḷveṇpā, 55.

'Listen again. Though what is given for safe-

keeping by men of penance be small,[1] it is bound to yield many fruitful results. Before the Cāraṇar preaching *dharma* from the shining slab of stone, erected by Śāvakas,[2] beneath the unchanging shade of the flowery *asōka*, in the town adjoining the Kāveri[3] region, stood a Dēva of great power, with beauteous form, resplendent like Indra's bow, adorned with garlands of flowers and gems, wearing gold ornaments, fit to be worshipped by the many invisible gods, but with one of his hands resembling that of a monkey with black fingers.

'All the Śāvakas worshipped the Cāraṇar and wanted to know the reason for the appearance of

this Dēva, when the god spoke as follows:

"Once there was a merchant called Eṭṭi-Sāyalan.[4] In his house many would gather who observed fasting. One day the chief lady of the house reverentially received the foremost among the monks. At the same time a small monkey from the village silently entered the house and worshipped the feet of the great divine. Impelled by hunger, it ate the leavings of the food and water consumed by the ascetic, and gazed on him. The wise person of steadfast mind became glad at heart and addressed the

1 For a definition of penance, see 1547.

Cīvakacintāmaṇi, st

2 The Śāvakas were Jaina householders who heard with reverence occasional preachings of dharma from the Cāraṇar, a class of divinities accepted by Hindu tradition.

3 Kāvirippūmpākkattuppaṭṭiṉam : Cf. Maṇi., canto xxv. l. 16.

4 A title given to merchant-princes by the king. Cf. Maṇi., canto iv, l. 58; Perumkatai, Bk. I, ch. 40, l. 116.

lady of the house, saying, 'Regard this monkey as one of your own sons.'

"The lady agreed to the wise words

of the saint. When the loving monkey died, the lady gave away the property set apart[1] for it, to the assembled Cāraṇar and prayed that it might be absolved from all its sins.[2] Hence it was born as the only son of Uttaragautta[3] at Vāraṇāsi in the middle country.[4] This son who was celebrated for his beauty, wealth and great wisdom, and noted for his great gifts died in his thirty-second year. Later he attain- ed the form of a Dēvakumāra and has come here with the monkey's hand on one of his arms, as if to announce to all the Śāvakas, "Please note that all my wealth and enjoyments were the outcome of the gifts of her who protected me with grace. Though in my previous birth a monkey, this change of form is due to the gifts of Śāyalaṉ's wife."

'The pious men of that city who heard these good and wise words of the Cāraṇar and regarded them as God's very 1

In accordance with the

advice given by the monk to regard it as one of her sons, the lady treated it as such, set apart a por- tion of the family property to the monkey, and on its death, dis- tributed that wealth in charity.

2 The idea is that it may not be born hereafter as an animal.

3 Uttaragautta was the ruling king of Benarés.

4 Benares in the Madhyadēśa. The geographical limits of ancient Madhyadēśa have hardly been settled satisfactorily. Madhyadēśa is frequently mentioned in Vēdic and epic literature as well as in Buddhist literature. Manu makes Prayāg the eastern boundary of the region and by this he seems to exclude the region of Kāśi from the Madhyadēśa. But Kāśi is a part of it according to the authority of the Kāvyamīmāmsā. This agrees also with the statement in the Cilappatikāram.

C—26

words, men of penance in that region, the Sāvakas leading
the life of virtuous householders, the Eṭṭi and his wife who
gave away gifts (*dāna*)—all of them went to the last
world of unending bliss.

'Now that you have heard this account, accompany this
lady (Kaṇṇaki) with the flower-decked hair, without
wasting any more time.'

When Kavunti said this, Mātari became glad at heart.
She praised the saint and took leave of her at the time
when the sun was setting. Beside wise Kaṇṇaki, with
beautiful, tender breasts, with shoulders resembling the
bent-bamboo, and with sprouting white teeth she passed

along, hearing cows bellow aloud in search of their calves. They soon found themselves in the midst of cowherds bearing on their shoulders, lambs, axes and poles with *uṟi*,[1] and cowherdesses with shining bracelets.

The cowherdess Mātari entered her house with her refugee, after passing through the gateway—with the daily flag flying thereon[2]—of the fortress walls encircled by a forest of defence and a moat, surmounted by a mechanical bow with self-projecting (arrows),[3] a clutching machine[4] with its black claws, slings, shooting stones, boiling oils, cauldrons for smelting copper, furnaces for smelting iron,

1 A brief description of cowherds and their womenfolk returning home after nightfall.

2 The flag celebrating daily victory. The interpretation is appropriate in the light of the Maturaikkāñci. l. 368.

3 Lines 207-16 have been quoted by the celebrated commentator Parimēlaḷakar in commenting on the Kuraḷveṇpā 743.

Here is a detailed description of defences in the fortification.

4 The machine would clutch, like a monkey, those who toutched it.

baskets of stones (for throwing), hooks,[1] chains,[2] traps shaped like *āṇṭalai* birds,[3] iron arms,[4] sharp poles,[5] bundles of arrows and of nails, fearful beams, needles to be thrust into the fingers (of enemies), the kingfisher machine which would pluck out the eyes (of the enemy), pig-shaped implements,[6] bamboo-like machines,[7] heavy weighted bolts,[8] wooden

bars thrust across the entrance, clubs, missiles, lances, and many more such things.[9]

1 Hooks were to pull up people scaling fortress walls.

2 Chains were used for strangling.

3 Traps which would fly like the bird āṇṭalai and peck forcibly at the crown of the head. This bird is said to possess a manlike head. (See Kalinga., 'Kōil', l. 16.)

4 Iron rods for throwing enemies into the moat if they attempted to cross it.

5 These were poles with pointed heads upon which the enemy was transfixed and pulled downwards so as to rend his body into two halves.

6 These were of iron whose spikes would tear out the bowels of an enemy.

7 These were fastened with iron rods to beat enemies with.

8 The mechanism by which these bolts would drop suddenly on the heads of persons who attempted to open the doorways.

9 This suggests that the abovementioned devices did not exhaust the defences of the fort.

Canto XVI

KOLAIKKALAK KATAI

OR

THE PLACE OF EXECUTION

The cowherdess (Mātari) who delightedly took the precious damsel (Kaṇṇaki) under her protection, left her to the other cowherdesses with excellent bangles, in a secure cottage,[1] beautified with red mud, which had a cool

courtyard in front, separated from the hedge-encircled

residential quarters[2] of the cowherds who sold buttermilk.

After giving her a refreshing bath, Matari addressed

her in words of praise thus: 'O you, who have come

here with beauty unadorned, as if to destroy the made-

up beauty[3] of Madura ladies decorated with costly and

glittering jewels of gold, take my daughter Aiyai, as your

personal attendant. I shall keep watch over you, O girl

with the fragrant locks of hair, as keenly as I would over

gold.[4] O lady, live here with me.' She continued: 'The

1 Apparently it was the guest-house of the cowherd com-

munity. The courtyard in front perhaps resembled those invariably found in front of the houses recently excavated in the Indus valley.

2 A description of the residential quarters of the cowherds, their architecture and outward appearance. The simple life of these people is portrayed. Cf. Perumpāṉā., l. 163; Kalittokai, st. 104; Akam., st. 394.

3 A contrast between the natural beauty of Kaṇṇaki and the made-up beauty of Madura women.

4 The importance and value of gold are emphasized elsewhere also (see Ācāra, st. 99).

lady of great penance (Kavunti) has cured[1] you of the fatigue of your journey and brought you

to a faultless
place; have you any more anxiety for your husband?'[2]

Turning to her maidens she said: 'Since this lord
(Kōvalan) observes the vows of the Śāvakas,[3] get ready
without delay the good vessels needed by Kaṇṇaki to cook
the daily meal with the aid of her husband's sister.'[4] At
this the cowherdesses offered unused cooking-vessels as
befitting wealthy people and some almost ripe, round
jack-fruits that never flower,[5] white-striped cucumbers,
green pomegranates, mangoes, sweet plantains, rice of
the first quality, and milk from their own cows,[6] saying:
'Lady of the round bracelets, please receive these.'

When Kaṇṇaki had cut the different green vegetables
with a curved knife, her tender fingers became reddened,
her face perspired, her superb eyes became bloodshot;
and she turned aside from the smoking oven. Then with
the aid of the fire of straw lit by Aiyai, Kaṇṇaki cooked
to the best of her ability for her husband. When that
lord had seated himself on a small mat dexterously made
from the white leaves of the palmyra tree by a trained

1 Spiritual cure is implied.

2 The word for husband in the text is makaṉ, a rare use of the term in this sense. See Maṇi., canto xxi, l. 29.

3 Aṭiyārkkunallār makes Kōvalaṉ a Jain and interprets the passage in the light of the Jaina custom of not

eating after night-
fall. It may be a reference to the daily meal.

4 The reference is to Aiyai whom Kaṇṇaki treats as though she were Kōvalaṉ's sister.

5 Kōḷippākal is still eaten in Madura.

6 This list of the food of the Āyar community indicates their standard of living.
rians.

The inference is that they were vegeta- 254

maid,[1] with her flower-like hands she sprinkled water from an earthen-pot over the feet of her lord.[2]

Then as if to remove the unconsciousness of Mother

Earth, she sprinkled watar on the ground and making it

smooth with her palms, spread a tender plantain leaf and

said: 'Here is food, O Lord! Please eat.' When every-

thing prescribed for those born in the Vaiśya caste had

been performed as well as possible,[3] Aiyai and her mother

looked at them with pleased eyes and said: 'Is this lord

who eats good food Kṛishṇa[4] wlth the colour of the newly-

opened *kāya* flower, nursed by Aśōtai[5] in the village of

cowherds? Is this lady with many shoulder-bracelets the

1 These are some of the Vaiśya practices and conventions

before taking food.

Cf. Tolk., 'Marap.', sūtra 85. The earth is

cleaned by sprinkling it with water so that the surface may be even and will not injure the leaf on which the meal is served. The plantain-leaf, then, as today, served this purpose. It may be noted that the āsana or seat was made not of wood but of grass.

2 It was then a practice, as is still observed among certain communities, to wash the feet before going to meals. Here it is not clear whether Kaṇṇaki removed the water from Kōvalaṉ's feet consequent on his washing, or whether she poured water on his feet and then sprinkled it on her face as an act of purification. Relics of these practices still linger in this country.

3 'As well as possible' is used by the poet advisedly. It implies that Kōvalaṉ could not attend to all his daily religious duties as thoroughly and punctually in a foreign

place as he could
in his own home.

4 Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki are compared to Kṛishṇa and Nappiṉṉai, the cowherdess whom Kṛishṇa took in wedlock. Here is a hard fact proving the antiquity of the Kṛishṇa cult, well known in the early centuries of the Christian era.

5 Yaśōda (Tamil, Aśōdai) is the wife of Nanda and foster-mother of Kṛishṇa, the family god of cowherds. (See Bhāga. Pur., Bk, X, ch. 9, st., 14-20).

brightest lamp (Piṉṉai) of our community, who gave succour to the Lord of the blue gem, on the banks of the river Yamunā?[1] Our eyes are not (keen) enough to see this splendid sight.'

To great Kōvalaṉ who was sitting fully satisfied
after his meal, were offered tender leaves and nuts[2]
by (Kaṇṇaki) of the black tresses. He said to her:
'Come' and clasping her, continued: 'Doubting whether
these tender feet of thine would have strength enough to
walk over the tracts covered with gravel and stone, and
taking pity on us for having crossed these painful deserts,
how miserable will our aged parents[3] feel? Is this (our
present condition) illusion? Is it due to cruel fate?[4] My
mind is so confused that I know nothing. O is there hope
for one who has wasted his days in the company of useless

men and debauchees, among groups of scandal-mongers indulging in boisterous laughter, ever hankering after sinful deeds, neglecting the good words spoken by wise men? I have not been dutiful to my aged parents. I

1 The Yamunā is the river where Kṛishṇa sported with the cowherdesses. This is a reference to the aquatics (jalakriḍa) indulged in by Kṛishṇa in the course of his rāsakriḍa (ibid., ch. 30-34): see also Vishṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V, ch. 13.

2 Note the reference to the use of betels and nuts after food. The reader may profitably compare this with ll. 240-3 of canto xxviii of the Maṇimēkalai, where Maṇimēkalai entertains Aṛavaṇaṭikaḷ to dinner. This proves that even Bhikṣus took betels, a custom forbidden by Hindu law; also that camphor took the place of chuṇām. Cf. Jātakas, Vol. I, pp. 132 and 152. See also Tolk., 'Etai', sūtra 36, commentary by Iḷampūraṇar.

3 The expression yemmutukuravar in this line means 'our parents' and consequently the reference is to the

parents of both
Kaṇṇaki and Kōvalaṉ.

4 Cf. Kuṟaḷveṇpā 1311.

have also disgraced thee who art young in years, but old in wisdom. I never thought that I was doing wrong. Even though I asked thee not to leave our great city for this place,[1] thou camest with me. What a thing thou didst!

Kaṇṇaki rejoined: 'Though I could not give charity to observers of *dharma*,[2] or honour Brahmanas, receive saints and ascetics, or entertain guests as befits our great family, I hid from your revered mother and your highly reputed and honourable father, much esteemed by the king, my sorrow at not having you before me; but they knew it and were full of affection for me and spoke loving words. In spite of my pretended smile, my

emaciated body made them know my inner anxiety at which they were highly grieved. Though you deviated from the right path, because I kept to the path of rectitude, I volunteered to come along with you.'

Kōvalan said: 'O thou who hast given up thy parents and relations, menial servants, nurse-maids[3] and female-attendants, and taken as thy great aids modesty, credulity, good conduct, and chastity,[4] hast rid me of my troubles by accompanying me.

1 The reference is to Pukār and Madura.

2 The duties of a true householder are given. Cf. Kuṟaḷ, ch. 8.
Parimēlaḷakar quotes ll. 71-3 in his commentary.
It may be noted in passing that these duties correspond to the injunctions of Hindu law.
Chaste women could not give charity in the absence of their husbands.

3 Aṭiyōr-pānku. Five are distinguished: one who plays with a child, one who feeds it, one who lulls it to sleep, one who teaches it to speak,

and its foster-mother. See Cīvakacintāmaṇi, st. 363 and commentary.

4 These four attributes took the place of parents, maidser- vants, companions

and associates. The Pingalandai Nighaṇṭu

'O purest gold, creeper, girl with fragrant curls of hair! 'O embodiment of modesty, light of the vast world!

'O tender offshoot of chastity, storehouse of virtues!

'I shall go with one of the anklets that adorn thy beautiful feet and return after exchanging it for money.

Till then do not lose heart.'

Closely embracing his lady-love of the long black eyes,

feeling much for her being lonely and without relations,

and restraining the tears rising in his eyes because of his

mental anxiety, he left the home of the cowherds

and wearcily walked along the street, without knowing

—because his caste men were not aware of it—that

the humped bull[1] coming in front of him indicated a bad

omen, passed beyond the *tāterumaṉṟam*; then passing

through the streets of courtesans, he reached the bazaar.

There he saw a goldsmith who with a coat on, was walk-

ing at some distance,[2] pincers in hand, followed by a

hundred goldsmiths famous for their delicate workmanship

and exquisite handiwork in jewellery;[3] and thinking within

speaks of nārkuṇam as four masculine qualities and four feminine

qualities.

1 Superstition of the Āyar in observing bad and good omens. What was a superstition for one community was not for another. Vaiśyas did not consider a humped bull coming in front a bad omen, but cowherds did.

low

2 Arumpatavuraiācriyar remarks, that being a member of a caste, he kept himself at a respectable distance from the members of higher castes. But the expression may be interpreted

as referring to the particular gait of the goldsmith which distin-

guished him from others of his class.

3 Kaṇṇūlviṉaiñar and nuṇviṉaikkollar are interpreted by Aṭiyārkkunallār as skilled in 'melting gold' and 'making beautiful

jewels'.

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himself that this must be the state goldsmith[1]
of the much-
celebrated Pāṇṭyaṉ, Kōvalaṉ asked him, 'Can
estimate the price of an ornament for an ankle,

you please
suitable for
the queen of the protecting king?'

The goldsmith who resembled
Yama's messenger
replied (as if) reverentially, 'Though I am ignorant about that,[2] I can make crowns and other ornaments required by kings.' Thereupon Kōvalaṉ opened the bundle which contained the invaluable anklet. The goldsmith, a habitual liar, minutely examined the workmanship of the
artistic anklet, embossed with shining gold
and containing
inside the best rubies and diamonds

carved with serried

depressions, and said, 'This anklet can be demanded by

none other than the great queen (Kōpperuntēvi). I shall

go now and inform the victorious king about this. Till

I return, please stay here near my little hut.'

Then Kōvalaṉ went to the *tēvakōṭṭam*[3] near that

lowly man's house, and when he had entered a small

chamber, the hard-hearted thief (goldsmith) said to

himself, 'Before the fact of my having stolen the anklet

is publicly known,[4] I will accuse this stranger from

another land of the theft to the king', and walked on

(to the palace).

1 The office of state goldsmith was

an institution in ancient
India. See Kaut. Artha., Bk. II, § 13.

2 Note the dishonesty of the goldsmith, and the price he pays for it in the end.

3 Tēvakōṭṭam may refer to a small shrine erected in front of the goldsmith's shop.

4 From this it would appear that the goldsmith had very recently robbed the queen of her anklet, and this known to the public.

fact was not yet

There the great queen imagining that the king's heart had been won by the graceful appearance of the Madura

dancing-girls who sang different songs, and displayed the wealth of their instrumental music in their dances, hid her jealousy in a love-quarrel; and feigning a headache left him. When his minister and councillors[1] went away, the king repaired to the great queen's chamber attended by female servants with long glowing eyes.

Thc goldsmith who saw the king at the last entrance of the guarded gateway prostrated himself before him, and praising him in several ways, said: 'The thief who used neither crow-bar nor auger,[2] but relied on the strength of sleep-giving incantations to put to sleep the watchmen at the gate before stealing the palace anklet,[3] is

now staying
in my lowly little hut hiding himself from the watchmen
of this bustling city.'

Because that was the moment of the ripening of past
karmā, the wearer of the garland of margosa[4] flowers (the
king) without any inquiry, sent for the city watchmen and
ordered: 'Now,
if you find the foot-ornament of my con-
sort resembling the flower-garland in the possession of an
expert thief, kill him,[5]
and bring the anklet here.'

At this command of the king, the villainous goldsmith,
glad at heart, said to himself, 'I have

achieved what I

1 The term used in the text is

mantiraśśuṟṟam.

2 Crowbars and boring sticks were some of the instruments of robbers. Note also the belief in incantations.

3 Kōil is a technical term for the palace.

4 The Pāṇṭyaṉ king wore a margosa garland.

5 This is a case of punishment without judicial trial, contrary to the accepted practice. This was resorted to by the king in order to reconcile his queen.

wished,' and approaching Kōvalaṉ, whose cruel fate had enmeshed him in its close net, said (pointing to the men), 'These have come here to see the anklet at the bidding

of the king, possessor of the victorious army.' This false goldsmith convincingly explained to them all the things relating to the workmanship of the anklet. But the valiant (executioners) observed: 'The appearance and features of this man do not show him to be deserving of execution.'[1]

The wily goldsmith smiled scornfully at them, and set forth his reasons:[2] '*Mantra*, *daiva*, drugs, omen, trickery, place, time and instrument are the eight aids employed by low persons pursuing the ignoble profession of thieves. If you are deceived by this man's drugs, you will expose yourselves to the great wrath of our renowned king. If

thieves utter a *mantra* and meditate upon it, they can become invisible like the sons of gods.[3]

'If they perform the feat of making gods appear before them, they can show in their hands the stolen objects and yet walk safely away. By stupefying us with their drugs they can make us sit still in the same place. Unless a good omen presents itself they do not steal, however valuable a thing, even if it easily falls into their hands. If

1 The first impression of the executioners was that Kōvalaṉ was innocent.

2 The eight aids employed by a thief. Dr Swaminatha Aiyar shows in a footnote that kaḷavunūl (the science of theft) was the stēyaśāstra attributed to Karṇīsuta, the teacher of Kaca.

3 The term in the text Indirakumarar, literally means sons of Indra. Aṭiyārkkunallār interprets Indirar as dēvar. There- fore the expression may

mean sons of gods. The commentator points to another interpretation: Antarakumarar.

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they resort to magic,[1] they can deprive even Indra of the garland on his breast.

'If they decide upon the place whence they will to steal
a particular object, who could discover them at that place?
If they decide upon the time and get possession of the
object, even the gods could not deprive them of it. If
they steal valuables by employing their tools, who, in this
wide world, could find them out? To them, there is—

neither day nor night. If you would listen to the science of theft,[2] there is no end to it.

'Once, a certain thief stayed at the palace gate like an ambassador (all the day) and when it grew dark, disguised as a woman, he entered without any hesitation, in the shadow cast by the lamp, and in an instant removed the garland of diamonds sparkling like the sun's rays[3] from the Crown Prince.[4] The awakened (prince) found it missing from his shoulders and drew his sword from its sheath, which the thief clasped and warded off all the blows with it. Tired of this, the prince attempted a hand-to-hand fight, but the thief, expert in his science, escaped after

1 Tantira-karaṇam, in the text refers to one of the eight aids mentioned in the work. According to the Arumpatavurai, it is a reference to Karavaṭaśāstram itself.

2 The reference here is certainly to Karavaṭanūl (Karaviṭam) or Karvaṭa by Mūladēva. Can it be a reference to the Kharapaṭṭa of Kanṭalya? See T. Ganapati Sastri's edition of the Arthaśāstra, Vol II, p. 156, ll. 5-6; also J. J. Meyer, Das Altindische Buch, p. 953.

3 The implication is that the brilliance of the diamonds was such that they served as the light with which the theif was able to remove them.

4 The reigning Pāṇṭyaṉ king was Neṭuñceḻiyaṉ. His younger brother's garland was stolen by a skilled thief.

making the prince attack a jewelled pillar. If anyone of you has seen him, show him to us. Is there any on this earth who is equal to this thief?'

Among those who heard this murderous goldsmith, a young executioner with a lance in his hands spoke: 'Once on a dark night in the middle of the rainy season, when all the village was deep in sleep there appeared a thief,[1] with a chisel used for splitting the earth, clothed in blue robes, desirous of jewels, fierce like a tiger. I unsheathed my sword,
but he plucked it from my hands and could not afterwards be seen anywhere. Rare indeed are the deeds of thieves. Failure to carry out the king's orders will cause trouble to us. O men of martial valour, say what is to be done.'

At this, an unlettered person, in a fit of drunkenness, hurled his well-polished sword from his hand (upon Kōvalan), cutting him across. The blood that gushed forth from the

wound spread over Mother Earth, who felt extreme agony. Vanquished by his pre-destined fate, Kōvalan fell, causing the Pāṇṭyan sceptre to become crooked.

NĒRIṢAI VEṆPĀ

Because of the injustice done to Kaṇṇaki's husband, the never-crooked sceptre of the Pāṇṭyan, became crook- ed, —a result of pre-ordained fate. Good and bad actions yield their results unfailingly. Therefore always perform righteous deeds.

1 See Maturaikkāñci, ll. 639-42. Another instance of a theief and thieving is furnished.

CANTO XVII

ACCIYAR KURAVAI

OR

THE DANCE OF THE COWHERDESSES

'THE morning drum will soon be heard in the palace

of the Pāṇṭyaṉ, famous for his garlanded
white umbrella.
He is acknowledged ruler of the whole earth
by all the
kings of Jambūdvīpa, with its cool groves,
and even by
the Cōḻa and Cēra who have carved their
Tiger[1] and
Bow[2] marks side by side with the Fish[3]
carved by the
Pāṇṭyaṉ himself on the Himalayan crests. It
is our turn
to supply ghee', said the elderly lady
(Mātarī)[4] calling to
her daughter Aiyai, who came out with the
churning stick
and rope.

URAIPPĀṬṬUMAṬAI

Then she said:

'Alas! The milk in the pot has not
curdled. The beautiful eyes of the big humped
bulls are full of tears; some calamity

is happening.

1 The emblem of the Cōḷa monarch.

2 The ensign of the Cēra.

3 The emblem of the Pāṇṭya monarch. This shows that all the three Tamil kings led Himalayan expeditions.

4 The cowherds evidently supplied the palace with ghee by turn. A similar custom is referred to in the Vishṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V, ch 15, st. 22. It appears that Kamsā, king of Mathurā, was supplied with milk, and ghee by the cowherds of the Vraja or Gōkula. In sending Akrūra to fetch Kṛishṇa and his brother Rāma, Kamsā asked Akrūra to tell the cowherds to speed up the supply of milk and ghee to the palace.

'The fragrant butter in the *uṟi*[1] does not melt. The lambs do not frisk about; some calamity is happening.

'Herds of cows with their four-nippled udders are shuddering and bellowing in fear; the big bells (tied to their necks) fall down. O! Some calamity is happening.'[2]

THAT WHICH IS PROGNOSTICATIVE (KARUPPAM)

The milk in the pot not curdling, the beautiful eyes of
the humped bulls being filled with tears, the butter in the
uṟi not melting, the lambs lying without frisking, and the
big bells falling down to the earth—all these signs portend
some coming evil. Looking at her daughter she (Mātari)
said: 'Do not feel perturbed. To alleviate the grief of
our cattle, we shall dance the *kuravai*'[3] in the presence of
Kaṇṇaki, that jewel among the damsels of the earth.

1 A pot suspended in a network of rope or iron.

2 The evil portents which point to an impending calamity

according to the belief of the cowherds.

3 After enumerating again the evil portents, the cowherdess told her daughter the remedy to avert the impending calamity.

The remedy was kuravai (rāsakrīḍa) the origin of which is traced back to Lord Kṛishṇa and his spouse Nappiṉṉai. In commenting on the term rāsa occurring in Vishṇu Purāṇa (Bk. V, ch. 13, pp. 532-5), H. H. Wilson, the translator, notes the following.

'The rāsa dance is a dance in which men and women hold each other's hands and go round in a circle, singing airs varying in melody and tune.' According to Bharata the number of persons should not exceed sixtyfour. There is a reference to the rāsa-maṇḍala in the Brahmavaivartta Purāṇa where Rādhā is accompanied by thirty-six Gōpis, many inferior personages.

each of the latter being attended by
In the Brahmavaivartta the maṇḍala

is not a ring of dancers but a circle of definite space within Kṛishṇa, Rādhā, and the Gōpis diverted themselves.

which

Among the many boyhood games[1] played by Māyavaṉ and his elder brother Balarāma in the *erumaṉṟam* of the *Āyar- pāṭi*,[2] the *kuravai* was one. It was played by Māyavaṉ with Piṉṉai of the long lance-like eyes.

REHEARSAL (KOḶU)[3]

1. 'This sweet lady with the garland of flowers loves him who can jump upon the black bull undaunted by its rage,' she said, pointing to a certain damsel.

1 Here is a distinct reference to a number of dramatic per- formances by the boy Kṛishṇa with Balarāma and Nappiṉṉai. The kuravai was one such

performance. The term nāṭakam cannot be taken in its absolute sense as a dramatic composition.

2 Āyar-pāṭi = the quarters of the cowherds; Gōkulam is perhaps its Sanskrit equivalent. Erumanram or Tāterumanram is the public place of the Āyar. It was an open courtyard with a raised platform.

3 It was a custom in the cowherd community for young girls, until they were married, to select their own bulls from the common stall, and to tend them. The bulls would then be let loose, and whichever young cowherd could successfully bring the beast under control in an open contest, was deemed the proper life-partner for the girl. Apparently it was one of the ancient wedding customs among the Āyar. This custom also can be traced to their family deity Kṛishṇa, who, tradition affirms, curbed the fury of seven bulls coloured black, white, and brown, and married the girls who were tending them. The Āḻvārs, who flourished several centuries after the composition of the Cilappatikāram, also attribute this incident to Kṛishṇa. (See Dikshitar's article on 'Kṛishṇa in Tamil Literature' in Indian Culture, Vol. IV, No. 3, Calcutta, 1937.) One can see a remnant of this

insti- tution surviving today in the form of mimic shows on the Māṭṭu-

Poṅkal day following Poṅkal festival every year, in the January. Selected bulls are let loose in the villages

middle of

with new

towels and other things tied to their necks or horns. Many people of all castes come from neighbouring villages and take part in the

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2.

'The shoulders of this girl with golden brace
lets become the possession of him, who can suppress the
bull with red spots[1] on its forehead.

3. 'This girl with her beautiful hair

decked with jasmine flowers is the recognized bride for him who can mount that strong young bull.

4. 'The shoulders of this creeper-like damsel will

be owned by him who can crush the bull with the small white spots.

5. 'The soft breasts of this creeper-like girl are the possession of him who can overcome the bull with the golden spots.

6. 'This damsel with her beauteous hair decked
with *konrai* flowers, become the wife of him who can
mount that victorious young bull.

7. 'This girl resembling burgeoning flowers will
be of right his, who can control the milk-white bull.'

STRINGENDO

(EṬUTTUKKĀṬṬU)[2]

(Then the elderly Mātari proceeded to allocate their places in the dance) saying to her

daughter that these seven

contest to bring the animal under control.
all connexion with marriage.

But now it has lost

1 Cf. Kalittokai, 'Mullai', ch. 4, st. 65
The expression used is nerricclvalai.

in this connexion.

2 The seven girls selected for the kuravai dance were those who tended bulls in their cattle-stalls for the sake of getting suitable husbands. The song sung stated who was for whom. In this particular performance the seven maidens represented the seven strings of the yāl in their order and were named after each respective string.

young damsels had selected seven bulls from

the cattle stall and nourished them.

She made them stand in the traditional order (according to the arrangement of the seven strings in the *yāḻ*) and gave them names appropriate to their acting.[1] Beginning from the western end, the regular places (of these girls) were *kural*, *tuttam*, *kaikkiḻai*, *uḻai*, *iḷi*, *viḷari* and *tāram*. These are the names which were given by the fragrant haired lady (Mātari).

She (who stood at the place) of the *kural* was named Māyavaṉ. She (who stood at the place) of *iḷi* was called (by the name of) the victorious Balarāma. She (who stood at the place) of *tuttam* represented the cowherdess

Pinnai. The others were named in the order described
above.[2]
Pinnai and *tāram* were then joined to Māyavan; *uḷaḷ*
and *viḷari* joined the white Balarāma. *Kaikkiḷai* stood to
the left of Pinnai. The good *viḷari* stood to the right of
tāram (*muttai*, also *munṭai*).
Among them,
She who garlanded Māyavan with the luxurious *tulasi*
garland, would perform the faultless *kuravai* dance. Is
pinnai of bangled arms so beautiful that He who had won
great reputation by measuring the universe, would not
look at Lakṣhmī dwelling in his own breast? Ha! Ha!
So said Mātari (in great glee).

1 This is called vaṭṭappālai. For a detailed

description see
Abraham Pandithar's Karuṇāmṛtasāgaram.
2 Kaikkiḷai, uḷai, viḷari, and tāram. High and low pitched
strings are called tāra and mandara. See Vishṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V, ch. 13, st. 6.

THE DANCE (KŪTTUḶPAṬUTAL)

They then[1] stood evenly in the form of a circle, and clasping their fingers in the *karkaṭaka* pose,[2] began the dance in that posture. In the beginning the girl repre-senting the *kural* looked at her neighbour the *tuttam* and said, 'We shall sing with the sweet *paṇ* called *mullai*, in honour of Him who broke the *kurunta*[3] tree in an exten-sive upland (of the Gōkula).'

Thus saying, (the damsel representing) the *kural* began to sing in a low tone, (the damsel representing) the *iḷi* to sing in a level tone, and (the damsel representing) the *tuttam* to sing in a high tone. The low singer represent-ing *viḷari* in her low pitch followed the tone of her ally representing the *tuttam*.

THE SONG (PĀṬṬU)

1. O friend! If Māyavaṉ (Lord Kṛishṇa), who

used a calf as a

stick to knock down (*vila*) fruits,[4] comes

here among our cattle, shall we not hear Him playing on

his fine *konrai* flute?[5]

- -

1
What follows is a description of the actual dance.

2 The karkaṭaka pose was made by each dancer bending her

middle finger and ring finger in front, and joining the other two

with the respective two fingers of the maid next to her, and so on,

the big finger being excepted. In that posture each pair of

clasped hands resembled a crab (karkaṭa).

3 The kurunta tree is a species of wild lime (Atalantia).

This was one of the heroic exploits attributed to

Kṛishṇa. It is said that a demon stood in the form of a tree to deceive and kill Kṛishṇa. This was perceived by the god who killed the demon by uprooting the tree.

4 Bālakrīḍa of Kṛishṇa, Cf. Bhāga. Pur., Bk. X, ch. 18, st. 12-15.

5 Koṉṟai, āmpal and mullai are referred to. Five kinds of flutes are said to have been in existence.

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2. O friend! If Māyavaṉ, who churned the ocean
with a serpent as his rope, comes here among our cattle,
shall we not hear Him playing on his fine

āmpal flute?

3. O friend! If Māyavaṉ, who broke the *kurunta* tree[1] in our extensive uplands comes during the day among our cattle,
shall we not hear him playing on his fine *mullai* flute?
We shall sing of the charming beauty of Piṉṉai as she danced with her husband on the banks of the Yamunā.[2]

1. 'How can we describe the form of Him who hid the clothes of the slender-waisted lady[3] whose figure was bent to the point of breaking? Or how can we describe the face of the handsome lady who was (visibly) touched by the regretful look of Him who hid her

clothes?[4]

2. 'How can we describe the perfection of her
who stole the heart of her husband, who deceived all in
the water-sports of the Yamunā? How can we describe
the form of Him who stole away the charm and the bangles
of her, who had captivated him?

3.

'How can we describe the face of the lady who
hid it in her hands when she lost her clothes and bangles?
Or how can we describe the beauty of him who was pained
by the distress of her who hid her face in her hands?'

1 Cf. the Bhāga. Pur., Bk. X, ch. 30-34.

2 Tamil, Toluṉaī.

3 The poet makes out that Krishṇa hid the clothes of Pinnai but felt sorry when he noticed a change of colour in her face. Noticing his feeling for her, Pinnai also was troubled.

4 The plain-meaning is that the great dissembler Krisnṇa deceived all the world; but Pinnai deceived him by stealing his heart. The term niṟai may mean either beauty or chastity.

SONGS WITH THE SINGLE TĀḶAM OF TIME-BEAT

(ONRAN-PAKUTI)

With fragrant flower-buds in her locks of hair, Pinnai, has, to her left, the sea-coloured god who hid the sun with his discus;[1] and to her right, his elder brother whose body is white like the moon. Among her (Pinnai's) choristers is the Vēdic bard Nārada[2] who keeps correct time to her strains by playing

upon the first string.

Our Piṉṉai, with the nape of her neck bent, stood on the right of Māyavaṉ bright as the neck of a peacock, and on the left of his elder brother whose body was white as a flower–stalk. He who plays upon the first string, beating time to her strain, is Nārada, the foremost chorister.

IN PRAISE OF THE DANCERS (ĀṬUNARPPUKALTAL)

O splendid was the *kuravai* dance praised by Aśōtai
and danced in the *tāterumaṉṟam* by Māyavaṉ[3], his elder
brother, and Piṉṉai of the striped bracelet, which disarranged the flower wreaths on the curly heads of the young cowherdesses, who with measured tread were beat-
ing time[4] with their bangled hands.

1 The reference is to the legend of Krishṇa having hid the sun with His discus.

2 During the dance of Krishṇa and Balarāma it is said that sage Nārada, the first vīṇa master of the world, was beating time. He was a Vēdic bard in the sense that a Śiksā is attributed to him. There is now extant the Nārada-Śiksā, a treatise on Vēdic music (published in the Benares Chaukhamba Sanskrit Series) The idea is that the girl who represented Nārada, followed Piṉṉai in her song and dance.

3 Māyavaṉ can be translated literally as the Great Dis- sembler.

4 The plain meaning runs thus: 'To the movement of the feet of the principal figures

Krishṇa, Balarāma and Piṉṉai, the

'O friends!'

Mātari said, 'All of us shall sing the song of *uḷvari*

and praise the god, riding upon the Grauḍa bird. Let us praise him!'

THE SONG OF UḶVARI

1. On the breast of the Pāṇṭyaṉ king[1] can be seen
a garland painted with Potiyil sandal-paste,[2] a string
garland of pearls, and a jewelled garland of the king of
gods.

It is said that he who wears the garland of the king
of gods[3] is He who tended the cattle in the Gōkulam
(adjoining) the flourishing Dvārakā[4], and rent asunder
the *kurunta* tree.[5]
cowherdesses beat time during the dance. By so doing these
maidens became wearied in the performance, but not the chief
dancers.'

1 Note that the poet, who was a Cēra prince, gives pro-
minence to the Pāṇṭya and Cōḷa and relegates

his own king to third place, demonstrating that he is impartial in his treatment of the subject. The place of honour given to the Pāṇṭyaṉ may also be due to the fact that the poet is now dealing with the 'Maturaik-kāṇṭam'.

2 This means that sandal-paste was painted on his breast to look like a garland.

3 For the legend see Tiruviḷaiyāṭal Purāṇam, §44.

4 Dvārakā was the capital of the ancient Yādava kingdom, over which Krishṇa ruled. It may be noted that Mathurā was originally the capital, and it was under Krishṇa's guidance that the transference of the capital was effected. See Vishṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V, ch. 23.

5 This and the following two stanzas

represent the three kings as Vishṇu and thus attribute divinity to the ruling chieftains.

2. King Vaḷavaṉ (the Cōḷa)[1] the ruler of fortified Pukār carved the Tiger on the golden crests of the Himalayas and ruled the earth.

It is said that king Vaḷavaṉ, the ruler of fortified Pukār, holds a golden discus[2] as a weapon of war.

3. The Cēra, king of kings, and the ruler o flourishing Vañci, crossed the ocean and destroyed the never-ageing *kaṭampa* tree.[3]

It is said of this Cēra, king of kings, and ruler of flourishing Vañci,[4] that he is Viṣṇu himself who swung His hill-like shoulders and

churned the ocean.[5]

The divine power of kings was accepted as a matter of course in ancient India.

1 The reference seems to be to the famous Karikāla. See Introduction, p. 22.

2

Vishṇu is said to wield a discus as a weapon of war. The usual weapons attributed to him are śankha, cakra and gada.

3 From Akam., st. 199, we see that Naṉṉaṉ was the head of the Kaṭampa clan and being powerful took possession of some Cēra territory and Nārmuṭiccēral had to discomfit him and take back the lost possessions. It also transpires that chiefs who held island kingdoms thought that they were unassailable. One such was the kingdom of the Kaṭampas. It would appear that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ inflicted a crushing defeat on them and earned the title kaṭal-pirakōṭṭiya (see Patirr., patikam 4 and 5).

4 The Cēra capital, identified with Karuvūr. Contra K. G.

Sesha Aiyar, in the J. I. H., Vol. XII, pp.

184-214, 1933. See also his Cera Kings of the Caṅkam Period (1937), ch. 5.

5 For this legend see Bhāga. Pur., Bk. VIII, ch. 5, st. 11 ff.

MUṈṈILAIPPARAVAL

OR DIRECT PRAISE

1. O sea-hued god! Once, in days gone by, you churned the bowels of the sea,[1] using the northern mountain[2] for your churning stick and Vāsuki[3] for your rope.
O Lord with the lotus in your navel,[4] your hands which once did churn were fastened with the

churning rope of
Aśōtai.[5] Is that your *māyā*?[6] O, deceptive indeed is your work!

2. O wearer of the luxurious *tulasi* garland!
When the host of the Dēvas praised you reverentially as the One Supreme Being,[7] you, who could never know hunger, ate up the whole universe. Your mouth which swallowed thus (the whole universe), ate by stealth the butter from the pot in the *uri*.[8] Is it your *māyā*? Deceptive indeed is your work!

1 Bhaga. Pur., Bk. X, ch. 9, st. 14-20.

2 Mantarakiri. This finds mention in all Purāṇas.

3 Vāsuki is the great serpent which was used

as the rope in
the mythical churning of the ocean.

4 Sanskrit, Padmanābha.

5 Yaśōdā fastened baby Krishṇa with the rope as a punishment for stealing butter from other houses. (See Vishṇu Purāṇa., Bk V., ch. 6).

6 Māyā is a subtle word that means deception or illusion. It is a term of much philosophical significance.

7 Aṭiyārkkunallār conjectures that it may be a reference to the god accepted by the followers of all the six systems of philosophy.

8 See for this legend the Bhāga. Pur., Bk. VIII, ch. 29-31.

3. O Tirumāl! When the assembled host of Dēvas worshipped and praised you, you overstepped the three worlds[1] with your two lotus feet, to drive away darkness.[2] O Narasimha! Destroyer of enemies![3] Yet those feet of yours which thus overstepped, went as the messengers of the five Pāṇṭavas.[4] Is this your *māyā*? Deceptive indeed is your work!

PAṬARKKAIPPARAVAL
OR
INDIRECT PRAISE

1. Vain are the ears which do not hear the glory of the doughty champion, who measured the three worlds

with His two feet and yet found them too small; who penetrated with His younger brother[5] into the wild jungle to the reddening of His lotus-feet; who pulled down in battle the *Sō* fortress,[6] and deprived

ancient Lanka of its

1 The reference is to the Trivikrama avatār of Vishṇu. See Bhāga. Pur., Bk. VIII, ch. 20-21. A huge figure representing the incarnation is found in the Ulakaḷantaperumāḷ-koil, Conjeevaram.

2 In other words 'spreading divine light everywhere.'

3 Narasimha, as an incarnation of Vishṇu, half-man and half-lion, to kill the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu.

4 See Mhb., 'Udyōga', ch. 90-91.

5 Rāma's conquest of Ceylon with his brother. See the Rāmāyaṇa.

6 The Śō fortress or the Śōṇapura of Bāṇa was pulled down and its inmates put to death. This interpretation

cannot fit in here. Šō may mean the great and wonderful fortress and Šō araṉ is an attribute of the citadel of Lankā.

ACCIYAR KURAVAI

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protection.[1] Vain are the ears which do not hear[2] the glory of Tirumāl.

2. Vain are the eyes which do not see the dark-hued Lord, the great God, the Māyavaṉ (Dissembler), the God in the blossomed lotus of whose navel appeared all the great worlds, and who has red eyes, red feet, red hands, and red lips.[3] Vain are the eyes of those who while looking (upon the Lord) must wink.[4]

3. Vain is the tongue that

will not praise Him who triumphed over the deceit of the foolish schemer Kamsā,[5] and who went as the messenger of the five Pāṇṭavās to the Hundred (Kauravas), praised (by the Dēvas) in all four directions, to the accompaniment of Vēdic chanting.[6] Vain is the tongue which does not say 'Nārāyaṇa'.

'May the deity celebrated in the *kuravai* dance in which we were now engaged alleviate the distress which has befallen our cattle! May the drumstick of the drum of our Pāṇṭyan with the shoulder-ornaments, who broke

1 Rāma's conquest of Ceylon with his brother. See the Rāmāyaṇa, 'Yuddha.'

2 This is the Harikathāśravaṇam so much stressed in the Bhāga. Pur.

3 His form was dark except for his eyes, feet, hands, and lips which were reddish.

4 Winking eyes are the eyes of ordinary mortals. Thus this sight can be enjoyed only by gods whose eyes are said not to wink.

5 For the many villainous deeds of Kamsa, see the Bhāga. Pur., Bk. X, ch. 36; also the Vishṇu Purāṇa, Bk. V, ch. 20.

6 He was himself a Vēda Purusa and hence the Vēdas in mortal form followed Him.

the crown of Indra,[1] whose weapon is the victorious thunder, strike terror among his enemies and every day proclaim his victory!'

1 See the Tiruviḷaiyāṭalpurāṇam, § 44. It must be noted that the poet attributes the heroic exploits of an ancestor of the Pāṇṭyaṉ king to the ruling monarch. to a distinguished line of kings.

The idea is that he belongs

CANTO XVIII

TUNPA MALAI
OR
THE GARLAND OF SORROW

THERE the elderly cowherdess of dynamic charm[1] went to
bathe and to worship with flowers, incense, sandal-paste,
and garlands, Neṭumāl[2] on the bank of the deep Vaikai.
Towards the close of the *kuravai* dance someone[3] who had
heard a cry in the city came back in haste.
She said nothing; but stood without opening her
mouth to Kaṇṇaki, who said:

'O! friend, speak, speak out.

'I do not see my husband.
My mind is in a flutter.
The air expelled from my lungs surpasses the air (driven
into the fire) from bellows. If the air expelled from my

1 The expression in the text āṭiya cāyalāḷ. While the Arum-
patavurai sees in śāyalāḷ a reference to Aiyai. Aṭiyārkkunallār
interprets it as some other lady. Both do not seem to fit.

2 Śrī Iruntavaḷamuḍalyār or Antaravāṉattemperumāṉ. The offerings to the god consisted of flowers, sandal-paste, etc. In India the end of the most important festivals and rituals was
marked by a sacred bath, the avabhṛtasnānam of Sanskrit litera-
ture. See Śentamiḻ, Vol. VIII, p. 183 f.

3 This may refer to Aiyai or any other lady.

It is here

taken as a reference to Aiyai, from the fact that Kaṇṇaki addres-

ses her as

infer that

friend and companion later on. From this we

only Aiyai's mother Mātari went to the river

have to

and the

temple there, while Aiyai remained at home. Or, Mātari who went to the river, heard the news and returned post-haste.

lungs surpasses the air from bellows, will you not

what is being said in city?[1] Long live you, friend !

tell me

'Even during daytime a fit of shivering[2] takes hold of me. Not seeing my beloved, my heart is restless with grief. As my mind is restless with grief at not seeing my beloved, tell me what it is that people said. Bless you, my friend.

'I seek your aid, friend! I do not see my lord returning. I scent some danger; my mind faints. As my mind faints at something hidden from me, I pray you, my friend, tell me, what it is that they (*eñcalār*)[3] said (in the city).

She replied :

'O! Saying that he was the thief who silently stole the glittering anklet from the palace, the king's residence— that he was the thief who silently stole—the men who wore jingling anklets executed him.'

Hearing this, Kaṇṇaki sprang up in rage and then fell down on the earth, as if the rising moon had fallen with the clouds on the wide earth.[4] She wept making her red eyes redder. She cried out, 'O! Where are you, my dear husband? Ah! Ah!', and fell down in a swoon.

(Recovering, she again continued to rave)

1 Etilār is the term for people of the same

neighbourhood.

2 Generated by extreme fear.

3 Eñcalār is the term for 'others', 'strangers'. The citizens of this place were strangers to Kaṇṇaki who had only arrived that day.

4 The moon is compared to Kaṇṇaki's face and the clouds to locks of her hair.

TUNPA MALAI

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'Like the distressed women who keep difficult vows after their loving husbands have

been burnt in fire,[1] am I to perish in misery, because I have lost my loving husband through the fault of the king censured by his subjects?

'Like the distressed women who, after losing their husbands who had worn fragrant garlands on their broad chests, go in despair to many places of pilgrimage[2] and bathe therein, am I to perish in anguish, O foolish goddess of Dharma,[3] through the fault of the king wielding the sceptre of injustice?

'Like the afflicted women, who are ever plunged into
hard vows of widowhood after their beloved husbands
have fallen a prey to the funeral fire, am I to pine away
in grief, losing fame in this life also, through the wrong
committed by the Pāṇṭyaṉ, whose sceptre swerved from

the righteous path?

1 It transpires from this that cremation and not burial was customary and that widows led a life of fasting and arduous penance. They cared no more for their mortal bodies.

2 Even today Hindu widows go on pilgrimages after the decease of their husbands to bathe in the waters of holy rivers and pools in order to obtain final salvation. Bathing in tīrthas and fasting are generally practised by women after the death of their husbands. It may be noted that the practice of suttee was not the rule but only the exception. We may call attention here to a statement of the Maṇimēkalai, canto ii, ll. 42-50, where three classes of women are distinguished.

3 According to Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar, the term aṟam stands here for the deity of righteousness or the

Goddess of
Dharma. Kaṇṇaki addresses the deity as a foolish Goddess for
She was a witness of the king's injustice towards her innocent
husband. This suggests the belief that Fate is more powerful than
Gods, and its laws cannot be transgressed.

'O! Look at me.

'Hear my words, [1]
O all you good damsels of the cow- herd community who have gathered here, and have with foresight, engaged yourselves in the *kuravai*![2] Hear my words! Hear, all of you cowherd girls!

'O, Lord of the hot rays![3] You
who are a witness for all the deeds of this seagirt world, speak! Is my husband a thief?'

Then was heard a voice from the welkin : 'He is not a thief, O, lady of carp-like eyes!

This city will be con- sumed by blazing flames.'

1 ll. 47-53 are quoted by Naccinārkkiniyar in commenting on Tolk., 'Ceyyul'., sūtra 149.

2 Kaṇṇaki pays a tribute to the cowherdesses who antici- pated a calamity and danced the kuravai to avert it.

3 The reference is to the Sun-god. Kaṇṇaki who had already addressed the Dharmadēvatā now appealed to the Sun. According to tradition the Sun is supposed to be the unfailing witness of all acts and deeds. She demanded from the Sun-god an answer to her question: 'Is my husband a thief?' The Sun immediately replied: 'No'. In ancient times the sun cult was universal. Greece and Rome took to the worship of the sun, and Plato in the Republic idealizes the Sun as 'the author of all light and life in the material world'. A great part of the oldest Vēdic rituals are permeated with the worship of the sun implicitly as

well as explicitly. There was also the Mithraism of ancient Persia.

CANTO XIX

URSULVARI

OR
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

So said the Sun. She of the sparkling armlets wasted
no more time. Taking in her hands the remaining
anklet she lamented: 'O women of chastity who live
in this city ruled by the unjust king! Listen to this.

'I have suffered incomparable distress this evening.
That which should not occur, has occurred to me. How
can I endure it? See this injustice.

'Is my husband a thief? They[1] killed

him, unwilling to
pay the price[2] of my anklet. What injustice
!

'Shall I ever see (again) my beloved husband in the
company of you all, O
injustice !

women of great chastity? See this

'If I shall see my loving husband, shall I hear him
utter the longed-for words, that he was not in the wrong?
See this injustice !

1 According to Aṭiyārkkunallār the use of the verb in the
plural shows that the responsibility for the deed did not merely
rest with the king but with his ministers also. If this interpreta-
tion has any value, it bears testimony to the

fact that the king
could not and did not act on his own initiative but consulted and
took the previous advice of his cabinet.
It is not clear whether
in this particular case the advice was taken. It can be presumed,
however, that on such consultation was held.

2 The implication here is that her anklet was so valuable
that the king could not pay the full
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price for it and hence wanted .

'If I do not hear him say that he was not in the wrong, condemn me by saying that I did unjust things.[1] Listen to this !'

All the residents of the flourishing city of Madura
beheld the afflicted woman and

were moved by her suffering agonies. In bewilderment they exclaimed;

'Since irremediable wrong has been done to this woman,[2] the unbending[3] and righteous sceptre of the king has been bent. What is (the meaning of) this?

'Lost is the glory of Tennavan, the king of kings (Pāṇṭya), possessor of the moonlike umbrella and the spear.[4] What is (the meaning of) this?

'The sheltering umbrella of the victorious king that had cooled the earth now generates heat. What is (the meaning of) this?

to deprive her husband of it by killing him. To that extent the king alone was the theif according to Kaṇṇaki.

1 She vows that she will make her dead husband rise up and say that he was in the right and the king was in the wrong. This is in keeping with the prescription of the Kuṟaḷ that chaste ladies could do and undo anything. See Cila. (Tamil ed.), pp. 245, 315, 555.

2 The sympathy of the women of Madura goes out to Kaṇṇaki. They condemn the king's action, and seem to endow her with divinity.

3 This is an important statement as it suggests that the Pāṇṭyaṉ rule was tainted with unrighteousness for the first time. Here we may recall the words of the Brahmana Kauśikaṉ at the commencement of canto xiii in which he paid a glowing tribute to the Pāṇṭyaṉ rule.

4 The umbrella and the spear were symbols of grace and prowess respectively (see Perumpāṇ., l. 422).

'A new, great goddess has now eome before us bearing in her hand an anklet of pure gold. What is (the meaning of) this?

'This afflicted woman, weeping from her beautiful, red, and collyrium-stained eyes, looks as one possessed of divinity. What is (the meaning of) it?'

Saying such things, the people of Madura sympathized with her and comforted her by raising their accusing voices.

Among those who caused the tumult, some showed (to Kaṇṇaki) the body of her (murdered) husband. She, the

golden creeper, saw him; but her he could not see.

At that moment the red-rayed sun withdrew his fiery rays and hid himself in the great mountain, causing the vast world to be enveloped in darkness.[1] In the brief twilight of that evening the flowery creeper-like Kaṇṇaki lamented aloud and the whole city reverberated with her cry. She who in the morning had received from her embracing husband the flower-wreath worn by him and decked her tresses with it, saw him that evening in a pool of blood gushing from his wounds. But he did not see her in an agony of grief. She then mourned for him in

sorrow and wrath:[1]

'O! Seeing me in deep affliction and without a word of consolation, is it fit that your body, fair as the fairest gold, should lie here in the dust? Will not people say that it was my inevitable fate[3] that made the righteous king act thus wrongly in ignorance?

1 The poet wants to impress upon us the idea that that sight was so horrible that even the sun shut his eyes. In other words 'the sun set and night came'.

2 Kaṇṇaki wants the people to accuse her and not the king for her misfortune.

3 The poet repeats in a number of places his belief in past karma and its results.

'Is it just that,
in this elusive twilight with none to
aid me, your
bare ground,

garlanded beautiful breast should lie on the
before me who pine in lonely grief? Will
no people say that it was my pre-ordained fate which made the Pāṇṭyaṉ commit a wrong, that the whole world proclaimed unjust?

'Is it right that you should be lying here in the dust with blood gushing from your gaping wounds, in front of me, the unfortunate one, whose eyes are brimming with unceasing tears? Though his subjects accuse the Pāṇṭyaṉ who committed the crime, will not good people say that it is the result of my past actions?

'Are there women[1] here, are there women? Are there women who can endure such injustice done to their wedded husbands? Are

there such women?

'Are there good people? Are there good people here?

Are there good people who nurture and fend for children

born of them? Are there good people here?

'Is there a god? Is there a god? Is there a god in

this Kūṭal whose king's sharp sword killed an innocent?

Is there a god?'

While she lamented in this manner, and embraced the

breast of her husband, where (once) the goddess of wealth

had resided, he stood up exclaiming: 'O the full moon

face has faded!' and wiped away her tears with his hands.[2]

1 According to Kaṇṇaki such injustice could not be per-

petrated where good women, good men and gods

live. In brief,
she regards it as a god-forsaken place.

2 This means that the wounded Kōvalan lay in a state of unconsciousness for a long time, and smitten by a flash of consciousness, he rose up to look at her changed face for the last time, and removed her tears. He died with his last words, 'Stay

The fair lady fell to the ground, sobbing and wailing, and clasped the feet of her revered husband with both her bangled hands. Then he arose and discarded his mortal form and departed surrounded by a host of gods, saying as he went :
'O, my dear, stay; stay here.'

She cried out then: 'Is this illusion? What else is it ? Is it a spirit that has deceived me? Where shall I go and find the

truth of this? Else I will not seek for my husband till my furious wrath is appeased. I will meet the cruel king (*tivēntaṉ*) and ask him for an explanation

of his action'. So saying she arose. As she stood up, she recollected her terrible dream,

and her long carp-like

eyes were overflowing with tears.

membered it.[1] Wiping away her

front gate of the king's palace.

She stood up and re-

tears she went to the

here!' It is for students of psychology to explain this state of the mind of a dying man.
But the poet puts it in such a way that we are moved to tears.

1 This apparently refers to the dream which Kaṇṇaki dreamt and recounted to Dēvanti, before setting out for Madura (see canto ix, ll. 45-54).

Canto XX

VALAKKURAI KATAI[1]

OR

THE DEMAND FOR JUSTICE

AT that time (the queen narrates her dream) :[2]

'Alas! I saw, I saw (in my dream) the sceptre fall and the umbrella.
The bell[3] at the palace-gate shook itself and tinkled as it quaked.

'Alas! I also saw, I saw the eight cardinal points agitated; and darkness swallowed the sun. Alas! I also saw, I saw an iridescent rainbow in the night;[4] a meteor glowing with heat fell by day. Alas!'

THAT WHICH IS PROGNOSTICATIVE

'The righteous sceptre and the white umbrella falling upside down to the hard ground; the bell at the gate of our victorious king's palace quivering and making the mind shiver with fear; the rainbow appearing in the night,

the meteor falling by day; the eight cardinal points in a state of agitation ; all these indicate some impending calamity .
I shall inform the king of it.'

1 There is no commentary of Aṭiyārkkunallār available for
this and the succeeding ten cantos.

2 The queen who was fast asleep, woke up and recalled her
dream indicative of evil portents to the State.

3 Kaṭaimaṇi or the bell of justice, also called ārāyiccimaṇi
in Tamil literature. See Kamba-Rāmayaṇa, 'Bāla'.

4 A rainbow seen
in the night is considered a sign of
impending calamity.
Or is it a reference to a comet ?

Followed then by maids decorated with

sparkling and radiant jewels, some of them bearing her looking-glass and others her ornaments, and surrounded by many hunch-backs, dwarfs, mutes and other menials, some carrying new clothes, some carrying silks, some carrying betel-boxes, some carrying paints, some carrying pastes, some carrying the musk of deer, some carrying garlands, some carrying wreaths, some carrying feather-fans, and others carrying incense. Several ladies with fragrant flowers in their hair sang praise thus: 'Long live the great queen of the Pāṇṭyan (Peruntēvi)[1] protecting the vast world', and followed again by her companions and bodyguards making obeisance, and speaking in praise of her, the great queen (Kōpperuntēvi) approached king Teṉṉavaṉ in whose bosom Lakṣhmī ever dwells, and communicated her evil dream to him who was sitting on the lion-throne.

Just then was heard a cry: 'O, you gate-keeper![2] O, gate-keeper! O, you gate-keeper of him who has lost his wisdom, and whose

virtueless heart deviated from the path of kingly justice,[3] go tell (the king) that one who bears an anklet from a pair of tinkling anklets, and who has lost her husband, waits at the gate. O, tell him that.'

At this the gate-keeper approached the king, saying:

1 The Arumpatavurai calls the queen tampirāṭṭi. The editor draws our attention to the fact that even today in the Malaināṭu the king and the queen go by the technical terms tampirān and tampirāṭṭi.

2 The doorkeeper addressed by Kaṇṇaki was an official of the royal household, the dauvārika of Sanskrit literature. 3 The term used in the rājanīti).

text is iraimurai (Sanskrit,

'Long live our lord of Koṟkai:[1]
long live the lord of

the southern mountain; long live Śeliyaṉ;[2] long live Teṉ-

ṉavaṉ; long live Pañcavaṉ, unstigmatized by calumny!

'Someone waits at the gate. She is not the deity

Koṟṟavai, the goddess of victory,[3] holding in her hand the

victorious spear, and standing upon the nape of the buffalo

with an unceasing gush of blood from its fresh wound.

Nor is she Aṇaṅku (Bhadrakāḷi),[4] youngest sister of the

seven virgins, who made Śiva dance; nor even is she

the Kāḷi of the forest'[5] which is the residence of ghosts

and goblins; nor again is she the goddess that tore up the

mighty chest of Dāruka.[6] She appears to be filled with

1 The quondam capital of the Pāṇṭyaṉ

kingdom.

2 Seḻiyaṉ like Teṉṉavaṉ is another Pāṇṭyaṉ title. Pañcavaṉ is yet another title.

3 Mahiṣāsuramardanī.

4 Piṭāri (also Cāmuṇṭī) one of the seven lōkamātas. (Also known as mahā-māyā.) The names of these mother-goddesses are mentioned in the Purāṇas. The Purāṇas also speak of the fourteen daughters of Dakṣa married to the progenitor Kaśyapa, as lōkamātas. It is also said that Cāmuṇṭī was responsible for making Siva dance. This dance was, perhaps, ūrdhvatāṇḍavam which tradition records in the shrine of Tiruvālaṅkāṭu, near Madras.

5 It is to be noted that Kāḷī is different from Bhadrakāḷı.

6 The Goddess who killed the asura Dāruka. This mighty asura engaged in austere penance for which

he was blessed by Brahmā and told that he would not be killed by a Dēva, asura, man or any other creature or weapon either in the day or night. He was lording over the whole universe, and the chief gods attacked him in vain. Angry at his behaviour, a Kāḷī came out of Śiva's third eye, and she was sent against Dāruka. But even she could not equal him as he had the knowledge of a secret mantra which he and his wife alone knew. Umā went in the guise of a Brahmana lady to his wife and offered to pray for her

resentment. She seems to swell with rage. She has lost her husband; she has in her hand an anklet of gold, and she waits at the gate.'[1]

The king said: 'Let her come: bring her here!' Then the gate-keeper brought her and showed to her the mon- arch and she went near the ruling king, who said:

'O lady with the tear-stained face, who art thou, my young lady? What has brought thee hither before us ?'

She replied:

'Inconsiderate king! I have something to say. I am a native of much celebrated Pukār, one of whose kings of untarnished glory once allayed the suffering of a dove[2] to the wonderment of gods, and another sacrificed at his

husband's life with her and thus learned the mantra. Then in the evening Kāḷi challenged him again and killed him. This Kāḷi is is said to be Bhadrakāḷi whose cult is now prevalent in Malabar. The Malabar of this story.

legends Kāḷikarpam and Badrōtpatti furnish details Cf. the article entitled 'A Note on Kali or Bhagavati cult of Kerala', by C. Achyuta Menon in S. Commemoration Volume (1936), pp. 234-39.

K. Aiyangar's

1 The gate-keeper's first impression of Kaṇṇaki is looked like Mahiṣāsuramardani, Cāmuṇḍi, or Kāḷi.

that she

2 The story of Śibi. Cf. Puṛam., st. 37, 39 etc. Kuṛalveṇpā 72, Parimēlaḷakar, comment. The original story is contained in the epic Mahābhārata. Śibi was a monarch of the solar race and renowned for his kindness to animals. Once a dove fell into his lap and asked him to protect it from the pursuit of a hawk. The hawk demanded of the king either the dove or flesh from his body equal to its weight. The king offered to give his flesh and cut it from his thigh and from other parts of his body. The weight proved unequal to that of the dove. He therefore offered his whole body to be weighed and thereby saved the poor dove from being killed.

chariot-wheel his dear and only son[1], grieved at the sight of
a cow whose eyes were filled with pearl-like tears and
who rang the bell at the palace-gate (for justice). From
that city, Kōvalaṉ, the son of the merchant Mācāttuvaṉ,
belonging to a reputed and exalted family of faultless name,
driven by fate, entered your city, O king with tinkling
anklets, to earn his livelihood, when he was murdered by
you while out to sell my anklet. I am his wife. My name
is Kaṇṇaki.'

The king replied: 'Divine lady,

it is not injustice to
put a thief to death. Know that it is kingly justice.'[2]
The lustrous lady retorted :
'O Lord of Koṛkai, you have fallen from your righteous
course ! My golden anklet contains gems inside.'
'O lady,' said the king, 'what you said now is well
said. Our anklet contains pearls inside. Give it here.'
It was given and placed before him. Kaṇṇaki then
broke open her beautiful anklet, and a gem flew into the
king's face.
When he saw that gem, the king, with his
umbrella falling and his sceptre faltering, said : 'Am I a
ruler—I who have listened to the words of a goldsmith?

It is I who am the thief. The protection of the subjects of the southern kingdom has failed in my hands for the first time. Let me[3] depart from this life.' Speaking thus

1 Maṉunītikaṇṭa Cōḻaṉ. Cf. paḻamoḻi. st. 93; Kuṟaḷveṇpā 547, Parimēlaḻakar, comment. He had his son crushed under the wheels of a chariot, because his own vehicle had accidentally run over a calf, for which its mother, the cow, pleaded for justice by approaching the palace and ringing the bell of justice with its horns. (See Dikshitar, Studies in Tamil Literature, p. 191).

2 Rājanīti, also Daṇṭanīti.

3 The king's sense of justice led to his extreme repentance and final collapse.

the king fell down in a swoon, and his great queen col- lapsed and shuddered saying : 'It is impossible for woman to replace the loss of a husband.'[1] Worshipping both his feet, she fell down.[2] Poor woman !

VEṆPĀ

1. The saying of several assembly-men, that *dharma*

will become the god to Death to those who do sinful deeds,

is not wrong. O queen of the conquering king who did

an unjust and cruel deed ! I have indeed committed a

great sin.[3] See what I shall do.

2. Seeing me and terrified at me, the sinner with tears flowing from my red eyes, with the matchless anklet in my hand, with a body which seemed bereft of life, and with my dark forest-like tresses of hair, the Lord of Kūṭal became a corpse.*

1 People who lose their parents may be consoled, but not women who lose their husbands. The idea is that husbands are their very lives; without them women are dead to the world. Any relative can be substituted, but not a husband. The poet puts these words into the mouth of the queen when the king collapsed, but their significance is increased by their being addressed to Kaṇṇaki. This can be fitly compared with the statement in the Rāmayāṇa where Vālmiki puts into the mouth of Rāma a statement to the effect that wives and relatives can be

found in every
country but no country can give one one's own brother. The
verse runs as follows.

dēśē dēsē kaḷatrani dēśē dēśē ca bāndhawāḥ |
tantu dēśam na pasyāmi yatra bhrātā sahōdaraḥ ||

2 The queen fell down unconscious, but not dead.

3 The caption veṇpā marked above this stanza seems out of
place for these words are spoken by Kaṇṇaki to the queen who
fell down in extreme sorrow.

4 Again Kaṇṇaki's utterance.

3. The moment the Lord of Vaikai saw the dust on her (Kaṇṇaki's) body, her dark hair hanging loose, her tears, and the matchless

anklet in her hand he was over-whelmed.[1] And the moment his ears received the words of the lady he gave up his life.

1 It is doubtful in the light of the expression அக்காரிகை whether the third stanza of the veṇpā contains Kaṇṇaki's words. It seems to be the statement of the author, for Kaṇṇaki cannot speak of herself as அக்காரிகை.

Canto XXI
VANCINA MALAI
OR
THE GREAT WRATH

(THE SEVEN WOMEN OF CHASTITY)

KANNAKI spoke thus to the Paṇṭyaṉ queen:

'O, Dēvi of the great king! I am one pursued by cruel fate. Though by nature I am ignorant yet you will see that he who did harm to another in the forenoon will find himself harmed in the afternoon.'[1]

At midday a lady[2] with abundant locks of hair called upon the *vaṉṉi* tree and the kitchen[3] to bear evidence to her chastity.

When a woman with a wide, striped *alkul* was told by her companions that her husband was a figure of sand upon the banks of Poṉṉi (Kāveri), she remained[4] there

1 See Kuraḷveṇpā 319; Perunkatai, st. 56, l. 259.

2 Kaṇṇaki narrates the legends of seven women of Pukār who had won a name for their exemplary chastity.

3 This tradition is still current in Tiruppurampayam and Tirumaru-kal. The Lord enshrined at the former place goes by he name of

Sākṣīnātha. See Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar's note. A similar legend is recorded in what is known as Sāṉṟaḷaitta Tiru-
viḷaiyāṭal (st. 62) where the vaṉṉi tree, the God Siva and a well are cited as witnesses.

4 The moment the woman, who was apparently a widow, heard from her companions that the sandy figure was that of her husband, she did not return home but stood firm in that place lest the figure should be destroyed by floods. Even today it is a

without returning home even
when the waves encircled
her without ruining her husband's image.

The daughter of the celebrated king
Karikāla[1] followed
the floods which carried away her husband, Vañcikkōn,[2]
calling aloud: 'O, my lover with hill-like

shoulders!'

Then the sea itself came and presented her husband before

her. She, the golden creeper, returned embracing him.

There was the lady (in the form of a stone) who remain-

ed in the park by the seashore looking at the approaching

vessels. After the return of her husband, she cast off her

form of stone.[3]

There was another lady with lancelike eyes who, when

her co-wife's child had accidentally fallen into a well, drop-

ped her child also into it and thus saved both the children.[4]

custom among some classes for the chaste wife to go to the river

bank, make an image of her husband in sand and

after making

offerings to it, to cast off the clothes she was wearing and to put

on new ones.

1

See Kuruntokai, st. 31; Akam.. st. 45, 76, etc. The name

of Karikāla's daughter was Ātimanti, also Manti, (Akam.); Tolk.

Akattiṇai, sūtra 54 Naccinārkkiniyar's gloss. She seems to be

younger than Auvvaiyār, the great Caṅkam poetess. This shows that not only Tamil princes but princesses also were poets. Tamil women were highly learned.

2 Also Āṭṭaṉatti or merely Atti. The incident referred to took place at Kaḻār on the banks of the Kāvēri. See Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar's detailed note (Sila. Tamil ed., p. 488).

3 The fourth lady turned herself into a stone when her husband went overseas, but assumed her original form on his return.

Though not a parallel, the Akalyā legend in the Rāmāyaṇa of

Vālmīki affords a comparison Akalyā, once turned into a stone,

assumed her original form at the touch of Rāma.

4 The fifth lady dropped her own child into

the well after
her co-wife's child, when in her custody, had fallen

into it. Then

Seeing a stranger staring at her with lascivious eyes, a
lady changed her full-moon face into that of a monkey.
When her departed husband returned, that flower-soft lady,
with pure gems on her *alkul* gave up her monkey face.[1]

Last there was the lady, beautiful as a golden image,
who overheard her mother speaking thus to her (the girl's)
father: 'Without paying heed to the wise saying of the
learned,[2] that a woman's wisdom is fraught with folly, in
the course of our play, I told my maid

servant, "If I give birth to a daughter, and if you, O, maid of lustrous armlets, give birth to a son, he will be my daughter's husband." She has borne this in mind, and now demands their wedlock. I hear this with pain, my mind is much exercised. How unfortunate I am!' At this, she who looked like a golden image (even before the proposal from her parents) dressed herself in a new silken robe, tied up the tresses of her hair, approaching the son (of the maid) prostrated herself before him, and bore his feet on her head![3]

'I was born in that city (Pukār) in which such great women of fragrant tresses[4] were born. If these things

happened truly, and if I am also a chaste lady, I shall not allow this city to flourish but will destroy it along with its sovereign. You will see the truth of this.'

she started a hue and cry and with the help of her neighbours saved both children. She thus hoped to be above reproach.

1 Assuming forms at will shows the force and power at the back of chastity, the virtue of virtues.

2 Cf. Iṟai, sūtra 23.

3 Having overheard the promise made by her mother to her maid-servant—before her birth—to give her to that maid's son, she volunteered to marry him when the time came.

4 See Paṭṭiṉattuppiḷḷaiyār Purāṇam for a

slightly changed
version of the tale of seven women (Pūmpukār

Carukkam).

(After speaking thus) she left that place and cried out: 'O, men and women of Madura of the four temples (*māṭam*)![1] O, gods in the heavens! and O, ye saints! Listen to me. I curse this capital of him who did wrong to my beloved husband. I am not to blame.'

Then she twisted off her left breast with her hand, and going round the city of Madura thrice making this vow, in deep anguish, she threw that beautiful breast whirling into the fragrant street. Before this illustrious lady who had made this vow, appeared the god of fire, with flames, in the form of a Brahmana, blue in hue, his tuft like the red sky, and with milk-white teeth, saying: 'O, chaste lady![2] As I long ago received the order that I should destroy this city by fire on the day on which you

would be cruelly wronged, who can escape death here?'[3]

The wrathful Kaṇṇaki then ordered: 'Spare[4] Brahma- nas, the righteous[5], cows, chaste women, the aged and

1 The four are named Tiruvālavāi, Tirunaḷḷāṟu, Tirumuṭ- ankai, Tirunaṭuvūr. According to Naccinārkkiṉiyar, Kali., st, 92, the four are Kaṉṉi, Kariyamāl, Kāḷi and Ālavāi. See Cila. (Tamil ed.), p. 490. It would appear that the name Kūṭal was derived from these four temples of which a description is given in Sambandar's Tēvāram.

2 A description of the god of fire as he appeared before Kaṇṇaki. On the Agni cult there is an interesting contribution by Dr J. P. H. Vogel in Ind. Ant., December 1933.

3 This means that Agni asked Kaṇṇaki who should be spared.

4 This shows that the slaughter of innocents was not coun- tenanced at any stage or in any manner. It is interesting that Brahmanas were exempted, surely having evoked respect for their

learning and character. These must have been the Śrōtriyas often mentioned in Sanskrit epics and lawbooks. See Dikshitar
Hindu Administrative Institutions, pp. 1 87-9.

5 This shows
that members of other castes who were wedded to svadharma were also spared.

children, but go towards unrighteous people.' And the city of Kūṭal, belonging to the king of the mighty chariot,[1] was enveloped by fumes and flames.

VEṆPĀ[2]

When the glorious Pāṇṭyaṉ, his maidens, palaces, army with its shining bows, and elephants, were consumed by the fire of chastity, the immortal gods of that unfortunate city went out of sight because of their great purity.

1 The Pāṇṭyaṉ was noted for his chariot force.

2 This veṇpā, says the editor of the text, is not found in certain manuscripts.

Canto XXII

ALARPATU KATAI
OR
THE CONFLAGRATION

(In Madura) the burning mouth of the messenger god (Agni)[1] opened itself. The guardian deities[2] closed their doors.[3] In order to prove to Mother Earth that his rule was righteous, Ceḻiyaṉ, the warrior king of kings, gave up his very life on account of the dishonour caused by his

bent sceptre.[4]

Not knowing that the king was dead on his

1 The god Agni is ministering to the wants of the Dēvas.

Hence the epithet Dēvadūta in Vēdic literature. The rationale of all religious offerings to Agni is that he takes them to the respective gods and *pitiṛs* to whom such *havis* were intended.

2 Among the guardian deities of the city are mentioned the four caste-būtams:—the Brahmana-būtam, the Kṣatriya-būtam, the Vaiśya-būtam and the Vēḷāṇ-būtam. This proves that the social polity Varṇāśramadharma had come to this part of India at a much earlier period. It may be noted that different colours— white, red, brown and black—are assigned to these respective varṇas showing that once the division of communities was according to colour.

3 'That they closed their doors' means 'that they gave up

their legitimate
function of defending the four gates of the city
walls'.

4 The poet skilfully weaves beautiful
ideas into the text.

When the straight sceptre hung its head, it
seemed to give a
message to the king's mind that unless he
sacrificed himself it
would not come back to its original pristine
straightness of justice.

The rapid march of ideas—the rod of justice
bending, the king
dying, and the rod attaining its
oribed.

original form—is all vividly des-

throne[1] along with his queen of untarnished chastity, the *purōhita*,[2] the astrologer, the Brahmana judges, the finan- cier (Kāviti),[3] and the learned ministers, attended by the palace-servants, and maid-attendants, stood

speechless like a group in a painted picture.[4] (At that time) the elephant- riders,[5] cavalrymen, charioteers, and the Marava[6] soldiers with terrible swords, were bewildered by the fire at the victorious gate of the king's palace, and were permitted to leave.

The presiding deity of the Ādibūtam,[7] [whose body
shedding its cool and lustrous rays like a cluster of pearls,
was white as the moon,
wore a brilliant pearl neck-
lace along with other ornaments, and had on his shining
tuft a wreath of white lotus, *arukai, nanti* and other

1 Araiśukaṭṭil is the term used in the text for the throne.

2 The executive officers of the king are

mentioned. The purohita is mentioned first showing the high dignity which was attached to his office. For the place of the purohita, in the scheme of ancient Indian polity, see Dikshitar, Hindu Admin. Institutions, ch. iii, sec. 2.

3 Kāviti is perhaps the technical term for the Superintendent of Finance. For different meanings of the expression see the Tamil Lexicon, p. 903.

4 This is an indication of the flourishing state of painting in the early centuries of the Christian era.

5 The traditional fourfold forces are given. The fourfold army had come to stay in the Tamil land.

6 The term Maṛava may mean a hardy warrior.

7 A full description of the Vēdic Brahmana and his outfit.

The Brahmana-būtam was an ideal example for the members of that community to copy and follow. The description is told twice in certain particulars. Lines 16-33 are not found in certain manuscripts and from the redundant nature of the description, they can be taken as interpolations.

flowers. He was robed in the purest white, thin silk, not yet dry, and his breast was painted with paste made from the unblossomed *vaṭṭikai*, the bright dust of *vaṇṇikai* (sandal) and *kōṭṭam*. He consumed heartily the sacrificial smoke, caused by the pouring of honey, milk and

jaggery (into the fire),[1] and moved in the forenoon

from the bathing ghats and the temple of the gods, to

halls of Vēdic chanting.[2] He would stand on his feet

at midday and go to his home in the afternoon, holding

in his hands an unfolded umbrella, a staff, a water-bowl,

a fire-stick,[3] and inseparable *kusa* grass, with the Vēdas on

his tongue and his sacred thread on his breast] without

deviating from the established procedure, would kindle

the three fires[4] with the sacrificial utensils as ordained by

Brahmā.

Next was the great deity of the Kṣatriya-būtam,[5]

[whose body was the colour of the red

rays of the sun,
and who wore among jewels set with spotless gems, other
ornaments like the diadem (worn by a king). He decked
his tuft with a wreath of *campaka*, *karuviḷai*, ved *kūṭā*-

1 The *havis* offerings consisted of honey, milk, curds, and
ghee.

2 These are evidently *pāṭaśālas*, the institutions in modern
times, for teaching the Vēdas.

3 The fire-stick is a twig of the sacred fig tree, called *samit*
in Sanskrit literature.

4 The three fires are the gārhapatya, āhavanīya and dakṣi-
ṇāgni, worshipped by Agnihōtrins, a practice that continues
today in Tamil districts.

5 The outfit of the Kṣatriya-būtam. Lines 37-50 also are

nterpolations giving a description more or less as is found in the lines following. To wear a tuft was the accepted custom of the day for all communities.

ḷam and cool and sweet water-plants, *jāti* and other flowers. He wore garlands strung with choice flowers and other ornamentations. He had rings on all ten fingers of his hands,[1] and his broad breast was of *kumkumam* colour. He wore around his waist a soft brilliant-red silk, and he consumed the hot preparation of *cāli* rice brought to him in a gold vessel, besides other agreeable sweetmeats]. His body had the sparkling brilliance of coral, and he ruled the sea-girt world, holding in his hands the *muracu*, white umbrella, feather-fan, tall flag,[2] the famous *ankusa*, a steel spear and a binding rope of steel. He

drove away countless kings of great fame, and capturing the whole earth,[3] he ruled righteously, punishing evil-doers, and protected the world like Neṭiyōṉ himself with great and growing fame.

Then came the great deity of the illustrious Vaiśyabūtam[4] with his body the lustrous colour of pure gold, wearing every ornament except the diadem worn by cele-

1 The term añjumakaṉ is vague but has been interpreted as meaning 'one having rings on all five fingers.' No light is forthcoming from the commentary. The line may be interpreted as 'he who wore rings on his fingers emitting rays of light' (añcu).

2 The chief characteristics (lakṣaṇa) and deeds of the Pāṇṭyaṉ have been attributed to the Kṣatriya-būtam.

3 Reference here is perhaps to Kṛiṣhṇa helping the Pāṇṭava Arjuna against his enemy Duryōdhana. The Arumpatavurai interprets āḷvōṉ as Arjuna in l. 52 and maṉṉar as Duryōdhana and others in l. 56.

4 The outfit of the Vaiśya-būtam is furnished. The ploughshare and the balance are the symbols of the duties of Vaiśyas and represent the bhūvaiśyaṉ and dhaṉavaiśyaṉ into which the

whole community was divided. The Vaiśyas could give gifts and receive gifts in their turn. Lines 67-14 also are interpolations and repeat more or less the same description of the būtam.

brated monarchs of the strong spear, catering for the vast world as befits a member of the merchant community and bearing in his hands the ploughshare and the balance. [His cloth was of the much praised golden colour. In his tuft was a wreath linked together with flowers of *veṭci*, *tāḻai*, honey-laden *āmpal*, *sēṭal*, *neytal*, *pūḻai* and *marutam*. On his lightning-like breast was sandal paste of a brilliant colour shining like burnished gold. He would give and accept food well mixed with gram, peas, *dhal*, black gram, and several other green grains. It was he who enjoyed his meal before noon with water in his hand and frequent- ed granaries where paddy was stored, fields full of birds, merchants' shops and shady *kāñci* trees.

Holding the plough, the weighing

balance needed in bazaars, the *tāl*[1] of enveloping brilliance. and the *yāḻ*, he would favour (people) with abundance of produce and entertain guests. He would also sell to those who needed them rare articles brought from mountains and seas.][2] He assumed the form of a chieftain pursuing the harmless agricultural life[3] and resembled Śiva wearing a young crescent in his resplendent coiffure.

There also appeared the chief of the (Vēḷāla) Vēḷāṉ- būtams,[4] who received sacrificial offerings in noisy Madura, (who was the colour of the *karuviḷai* flower with decorative

1 Tāl is another vague term and has been taken to mean 'lampstand'.

2 This shows that the Vaiśyas had sea-borne trade as well as caravantrade.

3 The Vaiśya chief was the lord of the agricultural tracts. He is likened to Śiva.

4 The outfit of the Vēḷāṉ-būtam. Lines 89-96 are interpola- tions being a repetition of the būtam's

description,

ornaments of gold and silver, who wore
lustrous *kaḻakam*,
whose broad breast was painted with the
dried paste of
fragrant *akil*, who wore in his tuft a
wreath of flowers
grown on the branches of trees, creepers,
water-plants
and others, who held a plough[1] made by
expert black-
smiths, and who had attained
praiseworthy prestige),
whose body was like a cleaned sapphire, who
had a dress
made of the bright *kaḻakam*, and who had
the technique
needed for dancing and was versed in the

different modes
of singing.[2]
(These four pūtams) said : 'Since we know beforehand
that this city is to be consumed by fire on the day on which
the king's justice fails, and since we know that this is just,
it is proper that we should go away from here.' All these
four guardian deities deserted their respective quarters
even before the heroic woman plucked off her breast.

Then the street of grain-dealers, the car street decora-
ted with festoons, and the four streets occupied respective- ly by men of the four castes, began to be agitated
as on the day when the Kāṇṭāvaṇam[3] blazed forth [set on

fire by the reliant (Arjuna) of the powerful monkey-
standard].[4]

1 The plough was common to the Vēḷāḷa and the Vaiśya.
The latter had the balance as well.

2
It transpires that the Vēḷāḷas had their own rural amuse-
ments of singing and dancing so as to relieve the monotony of
their agricultural occupation.

3
The reference is to the burning of the Kāṇṭāvaṉam. For
a description of it, see the Mahābhārata.

4
This flag signified the leadership of Arjuna. It may be
noted that l. 111
is not found in certain manuscripts.

The flames did not go near the residences of the righteous though they blazed among the dwellings of the unrighteous. Unaffected by the fire, cows and calves reached the broad streets of the pious cowherds.[1] Strong and fierce male elephants and herds of female elephants and fleet steeds ran away outside the city walls.

(In that city) there were women[2] lying unconscious in their soft, smooth widespread beds under the spell of love and wine in the company of their husbands. Their beau-teous young breasts were painted with unguents, their eyes were darkened with collyrium and their hair was adorned with wreaths of fragrant, honey-laden, gaping buds filling the air with perfume. From these alighted pollen on to their breasts painted with *kumkumam* and decorated with pearl necklaces.

Other women, with yellow spotted *alkuls* and fragrant tresses, whose lisping children

with rosy mouths and toddling gait came in the company of grey-haired women, awoke from sleep on cotton mattresses.

The matrons who unfailingly attended to household duties and entertained guests, rejoiced greatly. They wor- shipped and praised the fire-god, whose flames rose high, saying: 'Losing her husband, whose chest shone with a beautiful garland, this lady won her victory with her

1 Followers of dharma as well as the animal kingdom were left untouched by fire. Similarly chaste women and innocent children were spared. It was by no means a slaughter of innocents.

2 Two kinds of household women are distinguished. The women described in ll. 119-27 are those who have not yet given birth to children. The women described in ll. 128-32 are those who have children. Besides these there were old women, as the reference to grey hairs indicates.

anklet. Is this war waged by her breast unjust ?[1] Not so.'

In the far-famed street of the songstresses,[2] trained in the sixty-four arts,[3] where could be heard the reverberations of the *mirudangam*, the sweet subdued flute, and the vibration of the singing *yāḻ* produced by variations in tone, the dancing-girls who lost their theatre, burst out:

'Where does this woman come from? Whose daughter is she? Wonder it is that one single woman

who had lost her husband, could vanquish the inconsiderate king with her anklet, and finally set fire to this city'.

Seeing the great city had lost its evening festivals,[4] the chanting of the Vēdas (*āraṇam*), the kindling of sacrificial fires, the worship of gods, the lighting of domestic lamps, the healthful repose of nightfall, and the resounding notes of the *muracam*, and because it was unable to bear the thrust of the blazing flame, the goddess Maturāpati appeared before the sorely oppressed heroic wife, who, pained at heart by the decease of her beloved husband, heaved a deep sigh (which shook her frame), and roamed

aimlessly through the streets and lanes[5] in a state of agitation, partly struggling hard to walk and partly bewildered and unconscious.

1 Here is a justification by the chaste women of Madura of the action of Kaṇṇaki and of her curse. It is said that they prostrated themselves before the blazing fire as an act of religious duty.

2 Here is a reference to the public theatre of the city which was consumed by the conflagration.

3 See above, p. 206, n. 3.

4 Śibali offered usually at evening. Other features were Vēdic chanting and prayers to sacrificial fires and at temples.

5 The term used for lanes is kavalai.

VEṆPĀ

The goddess known as Maturāpati[1] came before her who had wrung off her fierce young breast, and whose victory[2] equalled that of the Goddess of Wealth,[3] the Goddess of Learning,[4] and the great Goddess[5] who killed and stood upon the demon Makiṣāsura.

1 Maturāpati was the family-deity of the Pāṇṭyaṉ king.
Every reigning Hindu king, ancient or modern, has his own kula-dēvatā. In the Raghuvamśā Kāḷidāsa says that after Rāma's death the family-deity of Ayōdhyā appeared at midnight to Kuśa, son and successor. Today Padmanābhasvāmi is the family deity of Travancore kings, and Cāmuṇḍi of Mysore Rajas.

2 Kaṇṇaki's signal victory over the Madura king was tantamount to all the victories of the three goddesses put together.

3 Lakṣhmi.

4 Sarasvati.

5 Umā in the form of Makiṣāsuramardanī.

CANTO XXIII

KATTURAI KATAI

OR

THE EXPLANATION

WITH her head decorated with a crescent and her matted
locks, *kuvaḷai*-like eyes, white radiant face, coral-mouth
revealing her teeth, with the left half of her body

dark blue, and the right half golden, with a golden lotus
in her left hand, and a glittering and terrifying sword in her
right, with a victorious *kaḻal* on her right leg, and a match-
less jingling anklet on her left, Maturāpati,[1] the family
deity of the chief—who ruled the cool harbour of Koṟkai[2]
and Kumari port, whose northern limit was the golden
Himalayas[3] and who was lord of Potiyil—unwilling to

1 A description of the form of the presiding deity of the
city of Madura. This is in agreement with the idea in Sanskrit
legends that every great capital of ancient times had its own
guardian deity who was in charge of the city. We hear in the
Rāmāyaṇa of the presiding deity of Lankā,

appearing before

Hanumān, the monkey ambassador of Sugrīva.

2 Korkai and Kumari were the ports of the Pāṇṭyas. Here the poet refers to the Pāṇṭyan as chief of the maeltime tracts while in the next line he describes him as chief of the hill tribes.

This is one way of extolling his name and fame.

3 This does not necessarily mean that the Pāṇṭyan kingdom extended on the north as far as the Himalayas. It demonstrates however that the prowess of Pāṇṭyan arms had been felt by the ruling princes of northern India whose northen limit was the Himālayas. This is in keeping with the statement of Āriyappaṭai-kaṭanda Neṭuñceḻiyan occurring in the kaṭṭurai towards the end of 'Maturaikkāṇṭam'. A short poem is ascribed to him (Puṟam., t. 183).

face the graceful but sorrow-stricken woman, the heroic wife who, highly perturbed, had plucked out one of her breasts, went behind her[1] and said: 'Blessed lady! Canst thou listen to my complaint? Whereupon, the woman with the grief-stricken face, turned to her right and asked: 'Who art thou following me from behind? Art thou aware of my deep pain?'

Maturāpati replied: 'Yes, I am aware of thy great suffering, O faultless lady! I am the tutelary deity of the vast city of Kūṭal. I wish to speak a word. I am much concerned at the fate of thy husband. Lady of golden bracelets, listen. O listen to a word of mine, noble lady! Wilt thou not pay heed, O friend, to the lamentable disease causing anguish to my mind? Hear, my dear, the fruits of our kings' deeds in their previous births.[2] Listen also to

the account of your husband's past deeds resulting in this present misery.

'My ears have heard only the sound of Vēdic chanting[3] but have never heard the sound of the bell (clamouring for justice).[4] Except for the slander of kings who pay their

1 The poet

graphically describes how the Goddess of Madura approached the Lady of Chastity, giving us the impres- sion that she thought herself inferior to Kaṇṇaki. She therefore appeared from behind and hearing to her words.

made an appeal to her to give a patient

2

The theory of belief in past karmā is once again stressed. 3 The deafening chanting of the Vēdic Brahmanas in every corner of the city. Cf. Maturaikkāñci, l. 656.

4 The bell of justice, also called

araiccimaṇi. Tradition affirms that every palace had such a bell in front of it, for the use of people and even animals whenever injustice was done to them by the State, so as to bring it to the king's notice. The Goddess of Madura says that she had never heard the sound of that bell, implying that there had

never been a breach of justice in the State

tributes by prostrating themselves before our monarch, his sceptre has never incurred the displeasure of his subjects.[1] Moreover though fair-faced girls cast shy looks towards him forcing the passion of his powerful heart beyond the control of his intellect[2], as the young elephant runs wild uncontrolled by a trained rider, yet this is no stain to kings born in this noble family associated with high morals.

'Hast thou not heard that a Pāṇṭyan

king, whose hand had broken the golden crown and the glittering bracelets of the king of gods wielding the thunderbolt, knocked one day at the door-less house[3] of Kirandai, whose life was valueless (to others), and overheard his (Kiran- dai's) wife telling her husband : "You departed for a distant place, and left me in this *manram* saying that no fence was stronger than the protection of our monarch. Has that fence ceased to protect us today?" Instantly the king closed his ears, as if pierced by a red-hot smoking nail.

He quaked with fear as his heart burnt within him, and he cut off his hand[4] in order to maintain a righteous sceptre

to her knowledge, and that this was the first time that injustice had been done.

1 Protection of his subjects is the supreme duty of the king. This is also the prescription of all niti treatises in Sanskrit. (See also Puram., st. 72. Cf. l. 34 with ll. 76-7 of 'Vaḷakkuraikātai',

canto xx).

2 The weakness of the Pāṇṭyaṉ who lacked control over his senses is brought out, but this was never attended by injustice of any sort.

3 This statement agrees with that noted by Megasthenes in his Indika that there were no thieves in the land and that the people slept with their doors open.

4 Cf. Sila., patikam; also Palamoli, st. 102. The commentators on the Tolkāppiyam refer to this incident.

without any slur. There is, therefore, no blot on those born in this royal family. Hear, again, the truth of the matter.

'When a king of this dynasty, a wielder of the polished spear, who had richly fed (the combatants in the Mahābharata war) had secured peace, he held a great durbar.[1] An able Brahmana, Parāśara, who belonged to the good and fertile kingdom of the Lord of highly reputed Pukār wielding a righteous sceptre and a triumphant sword—one of whose kings weighed (his another awarded justice to a

flesh) to save a dove,[2] and cow[3]—and who had heard of the peerless munificence of the Cēra of the curved lance,

by offering the heavens[4] to a Tamil Brahmana poet, said to

himself: "I shall see this Cēra of great valour and long

lance." He then passed through jungles and country

1 This may also refer to an assembly of State when there was an army review including a feast in honour of the army. This

practice is evident from the Kalinkattupparaṇi, and the technical term for this is nāḷōlakkam and here it is termed perunāḷirukkai.

Hence it may be a reference to the Pāṇṭyaṉ king. There are others who find here a reference to a certain Cēra king Utiyaṉcēral (see below, 'Ūcalvari', st. 29; also Puṟam., st. 2, Akam., st. 233).

Several references go to strengthen the tradition that a Cēra took an active part in the Mahābhārata war.

2 This reference is to Cibi; see above, p. 248, n. 4.

3 This reference is to Manunītikaṇṭa Cōḻaṉ; see above, p. 249, n. 1.

4 Pālaikautamaṉār. Cf. Patiṟṟu, Third Ten, colophon. The Cēra is Palyāṉaicelkeḻukuṭṭuvaṉ, younger brother of Imayavarampaṉ. The legend goes that Kautamaṉār, a Brahmana and a Tamil poet, performed ten sacrifices (yajñas) and

in the course of
the tenth, the Brahmana and his lady disappeared by going to
heaven. In its accomplishment Kelukuttuvan helped him (see below, canto xxviii, ll. 137-8; also

Akam., st. 233).

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places and towns leaving behind him the tall Malaya hills.[1]

There, by the force of his dialectical skill,[2] which he had
acquired in the traditional manner, from the twice-born
Brahmana– who with the thought of achieving oneness with
the infinite[3] kindled the threefold fires[4] as ordained in the
four Vēdas and performed the five great sacrifices[5] and

the six great duties[6]—he defeated his rivals and earned
the title of *pārpaṉavākai.*[7]
As he was returning home with
great and valuable gifts, he reached the village of Tankāl[8]
of the righteous Pāṇṭyaṉ and of *dharmaic* Brahmanas. In
this village, on a platform beneath a Bōdi tree,[9] luxuriant

1 The Malaya hills are the Potiyil of Tamil literature.

2 An expert in the science of tarka.

3 Desirous of mōkṣa or salvation so as to be liberated from
the trammels of samsāra.

4 Gārhapatya, āhavanīya and dakṣiṇāgni.

5 Pañcamahāyajña, or pañcayajña as it is called. It is incumbent on the members of the twice-born classes to perform
these every day.

6 The six duties are learning and teaching, performing sacrifices and having sacrifices performed, giving and receiving gifts. See Hindu Administrative Institutions, p. 188.

7 It is a theme which describes the greatness a learned Brahmana attained through the performance of sacrifices. (See Puṟa., Veṇpāmālai, 'Vākai.', st. 9.) But here it is the conferment of a distinction by a king on one who comes out successfully in debates with equally learned men. The reference is to the branch of a tree worn to indicate literary powers.

8 Identified with Tiruttankāl near Śivakāsi railway station. The Brahmanas of this village are termed Pañcagrāmikaḷ by the commentator. Apparently they were one among the many local Brahmana communities.

9 The reference is to the sacred aśvattha tree which was also the Buddhist Bōdi tree. Cf. Rāmā., Bk. II, ch. lxviii, st. 17 where Bōdhibhavana is mentioned.

with green leaves, the tired man stayed awhile with his staff,[1] water-bowl, white umbrella, fire-stick, a small bundle of articles and slippers, and said: "Long live the victor whose protecting white umbrella assures his certain success. Long live the protector who uprooted the *kaṭampu*[2] from the sea! Long live the king who engraved his bow on the Himalayas! Long live the Poṟaiyan[3],

possessor of the beautiful and cool Porunai! Long live
King Māntaraṉ-Cēral!"[4]

'Surrounded by a group of playful youths, some with
curly hair and some with tufts and some with lisping mouths
and coral lips, toddling some distance from their homes,
he addressed them: "Young Brahmana boys, if you can
recite the Vēda after me, you may go away taking this
little bundle of jewels."[5] Then the son of the famous
Brahmana Vārttikaṉ, by name Ālamarcelvaṉ (Dakṣiṇā-
mūrti) whose rose lips still retained the fragrance of his
mother's milk, in the presence of his playmates, with
prattling tongue and great inward pleasure, recited

the Vēda, faultlessly observing the correct rhythm.

1 The impedimenta of an orthodox Brahmana. Kuṇḍikai may answer to what we call jāri still used by orthodox Brahmanas.

Kāṭṭam (kāṣṭha) are twigs of the sacred pipal used for havis in the fire.

2 See below, canto xxviii, ll. 135-6.

3 Poṟaiyaṉ was a title of the Cēra kings.

4 Perhaps another name of Palyāṉaicelkeḻukuṭṭuvaṉ. He was a contemporary ruler and chief of Kuṭṭanāṭu while Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was reigning in Vañci.

5 The Brahmana's love for the Vēda and his magnanimity in giving away valuable jewels to a child reciting it according to established practice show how unselfish were the learned Brahmanas of those golden days.

The elderly man was exceedingly pleased with young
Dakkiṇaṉ and presented him with a sacred thread of
pearls and bright jewels, as well as with bangles and ear-
rings before he departed for his native place.

'But the sentinels (of the locality) jealous of Vārttikaṉ
because his child had been beautified and decorated with
fine ornaments, accused him saying: "This Brahmana has
misappropriated treasure-trove[1] which belongs legitimately
to the king." They then threw him into prison.
Kārttikai, the wife of Vārttikaṉ, grew frantic. She

wept in grief.
She threw herself on to the ground rolling
and fulminating. Seeing this, the goddess Durgā of
untarnished glory refused to open the door of her temple
for the conduct of daily worship. When the king of the
mighty spear heard that the massive door remained shut
and would not open, he was confounded, and inquired:
"Has any injustice been done?[2] Come and tell me if
you have heard of any failure in the discharge of our duties
to the Goddess of Victory". Then his young messengers
made obeisance to the protecting king and informed him of the case of Varttikan. "This is not fair", burst forth the king in anger and addressed Varttikan: "It is your duty to forgive me. My righteous rule still has life, though, owing to the ignorance of my men, it has deviated from
the ordained path." The king granted[3] him

Tankāl with its paddy fields watered by tanks, and Vayalūr of im-

1 All treasure-trove went of right to the king and misappropriation was severely punished.

2 This shows the religious mind of the king and his fear of the obloquy of wielding an unrighteous sceptre.

3 Both Tankāl and the adjoining village of Vayalūr were granted as a brahmadēya village by the king in order to appease the wrath of the Brahmana and his lady.

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measurable yield, and prostrated himself[1] on the ground before Vārttikan the husband of Kārttikai, and in part appeased the unappeasable wrath of the latter.

'Then the door (of the shrine) of the Goddess who rode upon the stag, opened so loudly as to be heard throughout the long and broad streets of mountain-like mansions of that ancient city.

'At that time, the triumphant king issued the following proclamation by beating a drum placed upon the back of an elephant which was sent throughout the city:[2] "Release all prisoners from the prison. Remit all taxes from those who owe them. Let all who find unclaimed things and discover treasure-trove enjoy them."

'Listen how even such a king committed this act of injustice. There was a prediction that, in the month of Āṭi, on the *tithi* of Aṣṭamī, in the dark fortnight, on a Friday,[3] with *Kārttikai* and *Paraṇi* (in the ascendent),[4] a

1 Literally: 'showed his chest to the damsel of this vast world.' The commentator says that so far the king had not prostrated himself and hence the earth was raging with heat. But, now that heat subsided a little. However the term avaḷ may

refer to Kārttikai and may mean her rage (which at the mis-

carriage of justice to her husband would not fully subside) sub- sided a little.

2 A general amnesty and remission of taxes; even treasure-trove became the property of the finder. The state relinquished its rights voluntarily. What affected a certain individual became a general law. Cf. Kuṛaḷveṇpā, 172.

3 The mention of the weekday scholars draw the conclusion that the

(Friday) has made some epic Cilappatikāram must

be a later composition on the ground that weekdays were unknown to India until the fourth century A.D. But this is arguing from one unknown to another unknown.

4 Aḷalśērkuṭṭam is Kārttikai and Paraṇi (see Puṛam., st. 229).

great fire would envelop renowned Madura to the ruin of

its king. (That has come to pass now).

'Hear again, O lady of glittering bangles ! The kings of mighty spears, Vasu and Kumara, who ruled in an exemplary manner with their armies, over the good kingdom of Kalinga encircled by a thick grove, at Śingapuram[1] with its fair and fertile fields, and at Kapilapuram with its bamboo forests, became enemies, being agnates, though born in an ancient family of undying prosperity.

And to a distance of six *Kāvadams*[2] all round, owing to their war, none could penetrate that region. Then a merchant, Śangamaṉ by name, ambitious to increase his wealth, came with his wife, like people

escaping unnoticed,

bearing a great bundle on his head and began to dispose of

his valuable wares in a bazaar of Śingapuram of undimi-

nished glory.

'O lady of gold bangles! Your husband, Kōvalaṉ,

in his previous birth was called Barata,[3] and being in the

service of this valorous monarch, had in disgust given up the vow (of non-killing)[4]. He mistook (Śangamaṉ) for a spy,[5] captured him, brought him to the presence of the king of the conquering spear and beheaded him. Nīli,

the wife of the murdered Śangamaṉ, finding

that she had

1 Simhapuram and Kapilapuram were cities of the ancient

kingdom of Kalinga.
Vasu and Kumara, agnates, ruled over

them. See Intro., p. 34.

2 The battlefield extended

to a distance of six kātams all round.

3 Sans., Bharata.

4 Akimsā or non-injury to any living creature.

5 This shows that the spy system was widely prevalent. For a study of this institution see the Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra.

no resting-place, wandered about the streets and court-yards, and created a commotion proclaiming: "O king, is this your justice? O Vaiśyas, is this justice? O commoners, is this justice? O residents of this place, is this

right?" She raved thus for fourteen days, and exhilarated

by the thought that that was a sacred day she ascended a

cliff in order to rejoin her murdered husband in heaven,

and fell down cursing[1] thus:

"He who has inflicted this injury upon us shall be

overtaken by the same fate."

'That unerring curse has now descended upon thee.[2]

'This is my explanation. Please listen. When

actions in a past birth by those devoid of goodness yield

their results, no (amount of) penance can stop them. O

lady of abundant tresses of hair, after fourteen days[3]

thou shalt see thy wedded lover in the form of a celestial

being, but never more in his earthly form.' When she had finished explaining these things in the proper manner to the lady of chastity, the Goddess of Madura liberated the city from the conflagration.

Kaṇṇaki then said: 'I will not sit nor shall I stand till I see the husband of my heart'; and she broke her gold bangles at the temple of Koṟṟavai,[4] and once again cried:

1 Nīli's curse and its effect upon Kōvalaṉ in this birth. See Maṇi., 'Vañcimānakarpukkakātai,' ll. 5-34, for this curse.

2 No amount of dharma in the present birth can stop the laws of preordained fate. The actions of a previous birth yield their fruit in the next birth and, according to one theory, for several continued births if they be of a heinous nature.

3 See Cila., patikam, ll. 50-3.

4 Breaking the bangles was a custom in vogue in ancient

times. Immediately after her husband's death,

the wife broke

'I entered this city with my husband by
the eastern gate. Alas! I am now going
out alone through the western gate.'
Unconscious of day or night, she went
helpless along one side of the flooded Vaikai.
Dejected and sad, little thinking whether she
was descending into a pit or ascending a cliff, she
climbed step by step up the hill sacred to
Neṭuvēḷ[1], the bearer of the long fiery lance,
which tore out the bowels of the sea,[2] cut
out the heart of the mountain,[3] and vanquished
Asuras: and there, under the shade of a
flowery *vēnkai* grove, she pined saying:
'Alas, I am a great sinner.

When fourteen days had thus

passed, the king of gods,[4] who with celestials regarded that day as fit for worship, praised the great name of this famous woman, showered unfading flowers

upon her and revered her. In a divine chariot at the side of Kōvalan, murdered in the

her bangles, this being the first sign of her widowhood.

Kaṇṇaki did this before the Durgā temple. It is interesting that this custom

still prevails among certain communities in Southern India.

1 Arumpatavuraiāciriyar identifies this with Tiruccenkōṭu, which is not probable. Personal inquiry about any local tradition of a Kaṇṇaki temple there proved fruitless. This hill must therefore be one which was at a distance of fourteen days' walk from Madura to the west.

To venture a conjecture it may be the Palni range containing a sacred shrine of Subrahmaṇya.

2 A reference to the vanquishing by the war-god of the Asura hiding in the sea.

This tradition still exists in association with the

Subrahmaṇya shrine at Tirruccendur in Tinnevelly district. The story runs that after vanquishing the Asura, Subrah- maṇya departed
for Tirupparankuṉṟam in Madura district where he married Dēvayāni, the daughter of Indra.

3 This refers to the piercing of the Krauñca hill.

4 It is said that Indra in person took her to

Heaven—a rare
honour reserved only for women of chastity.

king's city, Kaṇṇaki with the forest-like hair went up to heaven.

VEṆPĀ

Because it is a fact that gods will worship her who worships not God but worships her husband,[1] Kaṇṇaki, that jewel among the women of the earth, became a goddess and the

guest of the ladies of heaven.

EPILOGUE

Thus ends the Maturaikkāṉṭam which describes the virtues, victories, and heroism of the dynasty of the Pāṇṭyas, who held the distinguished spear in their hands among the dynasties of the three crowned monarchs. It also describes the great glory attached to their ancient and famous capital, the richness of their festivals, the approach of the gods to the city, the unfailing happiness of the village communities, the abundance of their rich foodstuffs, the fertility yielded by the great Vaikai river, the neverfailing fresh showers supplied by the rain-bearing clouds, the two *viruttis* called *ārapaṭi*[2] and *sāttuvati*,[3] and the songs and dances in which these were exhibited. These and many other things, illustrative of the unmatched rule of righteousness of the Pāṇṭyaṉ Naṭuñceḻiyaṉ[4], who van-

1 Cf. Kuraḷveṇpā, 55.

2 Ārapaṭi (Ārabhaṭi)—'a kind of drama having for its topic the acquisition of wealth and centering round the achievements of great warriors as heroes, one of the four nāṭakaviruttis' (Tamil Lexicon, p. 242). See also Cila., canto iii, l. 13, comment.

3 Sāttuvadi (sātvati)—'a variety of dramatic composition which has a semi-divine being for hero and treats of virtue, one of the four nāṭakaviruttis' (ibid., p. 1362).

4 This Pāṇṭyaṉ king who was a contemporary of Cēraṉ Śeṅkuṭṭuvaṉ is called Araiśu-kaṭṭiliruñciya Pāṇṭya-Neṭuñceḻiyaṉ.

quished the army of the northern Aryas, and established peace in the southern Tamil country, and who again slept eternal sleep seated on the throne with his queen of fault- less chastity, are described.

We have other kings whose names were prefixed by Pāṇṭyaṉ

Ilavantikaippaḷḷituñciya Naṉmāraṉ, Pāṇṭyaṉ Cittiramaṭattu-tuñciya Naṉmāraṉ, etc. The term 'tuñciya' in these contexts means, simply, 'dead'. In order to distinguish the one name from the other it was probably then a tradition to prefix to each king's name the place where he died. It is said that the Sāmudiri dynasty ruling at Calicut continues this custom of naming themselves. See Puṟanāṉūṟu, p. 581 n.

III. VANCIK KANTAM

CANTO XXIV

KUNRAK KURAVAI

OR

THE DANCE OF THE HILL-MAIDENS

URAIPPĀṬṬUMAṬAI

THE hill-maidens spoke thus: 'We came to the hillside to
scare away little birds and drive off parrots, to sport in
the waterfalls and plunge into springs;[1] and while
wandering about with no other concern, we saw a lady and
asked her: "O lady, who lookest like Vaḻḻi, who art thou
that standest in the shade of the fragrant mountain tree,
vēṅkai, after losing thy breast and breaking our hearts?"
(Kaṇṇaki) coolly replied: "I am she whose cruel destiny
it was to lose her husband on that evil day

when ever-joyous Madura and its king were fated to be ruined." Hearing this, the hill-maidens were struck with awe and worshipped her with their bangled hands uplifted, and the gods showered flowers like copious rain.'

The maidens continued: 'In our presence and in that of other hillfolk she was taken to Heaven by the gods with her husband. There is no deity like her for our community, O people of small hamlets![2] O people of small

1 Here we are introduced to the daily life of the hill-men and women. They were devotees of Murukan, the god of the kuriñci region. Valli is the consort of this god.

2 Śirukuṭi as opposed to Perumkuṭi.

This indicates that their residences were simple in character.

KUNRAKKURAVAI

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hamlets! Let us acclaim this lady as our Goddess, O people

of small hamlets! Under the cool shade of the *vēṅkai*

whose odorous flower-buds (grow) on the slopes of the

hill with enchanting waterfalls, acclaim this deity, O people

of small hamlets! Play upon the *toṇṭakam*,[1] beat the little

drum, blow the horn, and ring the noisy bell, sing the

kuriñci,[2] offer spicy incense, perform the sacrifice of

flowers, and erect the surrounding wall with its door, hymn

songs of praise and scatter flowers—all in honour of this

lady who has lost one of her breasts—so that the great

hill may, without diminution, flourish in plenty.'[3]

KOḶUCCOL

Then began the song. (The maid said to the lady):[4]

'Dear girl of beautiful ornaments! You will not see

anything there, (come and) see what is here. The moun-

tain-stream comes bubbling along, as beautiful as Indra's

bow, mixed with the black powder of *añjaṉa*, the yellow

powder of *aritāra* and the red

powder of *sintura* (vermi-

1 A kind of musical instrument now gone out of use. This

and the mention of similar instruments like the drum, the horn

and the bell show that music formed an essential part of prayer.

2 A song appropriate to the hilly region. It may be noted that the ancient Tamils developed peculiar modes of music according to the geographical environment

land. There was pālai music, neytal music,

so on.

of the whole Tamil

marutam music, and

3 Kaṇṇaki was first adopted as a deity by the hill-maidens,

and then by the important kings of South India. A shrine was

built for her.

4 The words of the maid to the heroine. When the hill-

maidens began bathing in the waterfalls, their thoughts turned

towards their lovers who were at that time

separated from them.

lion). We shall go and bathe in it.
Let us bathe, friend;
let us bathe.

'Though the lord of the hill who enjoyed us has departed from us, saying "Give up your fears", shall we bathe in the stream that comes from the hill surrounded by a misty grove? We find no reason, do we, to be displeased at the fresh floods which come after embracing the rocks of his mountain?[1] O, it is only with the fresh stream which comes after embracing the hillock that we shall play: with

whom else should we play, dear friend?

'We can see no single reason to vex our hearts
at the new floods which come after sporting with the gold
of the hill, do we? O, it is only with the fresh floods
that come after sporting with the gold of (our lord's) hill
we shall frolic: with whom else should we frolic, dear
friend?

'We do not see anything that should vex our hearts,
do we?—at this new stream which brings the flower-buds
of his mountain? O, it is only with this new stream which
brings his mountain flower-buds that we shall play. With
whom else should we play, O my friend?'

PAṬṬUMAṬAI

'O girl of sweet words! We have been sporting, diving deep into pure water till our collyrium-eyes became red, praying to (Subrahmaṇya)[2] the wielder of the strong

1 The lord of the mountain is the hero. The poet hints that the stream (a lady) embraces this mountain of which their hero is the lord. But the maiden says that they need not be jealous of this action on the part of the stream.

2 After bathing to the accompaniment of singing and dancing, these girls prayed to their god Murukaṉ that they might be married.

deadly spear, and engaging ourselves in Come along, friend, let us sing.

kuravai (dance).

'O! This is indeed the spear wielded by the
deity who
never deserts the highly renowned Centil,[1]
Ceṅkōṭu,[2] the
white hill (Veṉkuṉṟam)[3] and Ērakam[4]—the
white, shin-
ing, leaf-shaped spear, which put an end
to (the Asura)
Sūra (in the form of a) mango-tree,[5]
in olden days, by
chasing him into the sea surrounding the earth.

'O! This is indeed the spear held aloft
by the match-
less deity with six faces[6] and twelve
arms; this is the
shining spear wherewith (the God) riding
the peacock
(*piṇimukam*)[7] and celebrated by the king of
the celestials,

1 The identification of Centil with Svāmimalai, by the annotator, seems to be wrong in the light of Ērakam being called Svāmimalai by Aruṇakiri-svāmigaḷ. Naccinārkkiṉiyar in his commentary ('Muruku', st. 189) perhaps followed the Arumpatavurai. Centil is Tiruccentūr, the famous Subrahmaṇya shrine in Tirunelveli district.

2 Seven miles from Sankaridroog railway station, and twenty-two miles from Nāmakkal, Salem District. The place is also noted for an Ardhanārīśvara temple containing a shrine of Viṣhṇu in the same compound. (See Dikshitar, Purāṇa, p. 71).

The Matsya

3 The identification of this shrine is not yet established.

4 Ērakam is Svāmimalai, seven miles from Kumbakonam railway station in Thanjavoor District, situated

on the northern
bank of the Kāvēri. The god enshrined goes by Svāminātha.
the name of

5 The present village of Maṇappāṭu, about eight miles from
Tiruccentūr, is supposed to be another form of the original name
Māpāṭu, and is connected by tradition with the Asura Śūra.

6 Ṣaṇmukham of Sanskrit literature.

7 Piṇimukam may also refer to an elephant (see Paripāṭal,
st. 5). The reference is to a dēvāsurayuddha ending in
of Indra, the king of Heaven.

the victory

vanquished the Asura enemies and destroyed their great- ness.

'O ! This is indeed the spear decorating the lovely hands
of him who was suckled by six mothers in the lotus-bed of
the Śaravaṇai pool (Śaravaṇappūmpaḻḻi);[1] this is the long spear that destroyed the Krauñca mountain, after cleaving the breast of the Asura who had that hill for his residence.'[2]

PĀṬṬUMAṬAI[3]

'O good girl with bracelets! I am moved to laughter. To cure me of the (love) sickness caused by the owner of the cool hill on which pepper grows,[4] my mother who is not aware of the idle talk in the village (*alar*) thinks that (the spirit of) Kaṭampaṉ[5] (Murukaṉ) has manifested itself in me,
and has sent for the Vēlaṉ's[6] (exorcist) *veṟiyāṭal*,[7] intending to abjure it.

'O good girl with the lovely bangles! This again provokes my laughter!
If the exorcist who is appointed to deliver me from love-sickness caused by the lord of

1 Cf. Tirumurugāṟṟu, ll. 253-5. This is a

favourite legend found in every Mahāpurāṇa, dealing with the birth of this war-god.

2 Cf. Maṇi., canto v, l. 13.

3 These also are the words of the heroine to her maid, evidently after prayer to their favourite deity.

4 The chief produce of the hill consisted of cane and pepper.

5 One of the Tamil names for Subrahmaṇya.

6 Another Tamil name of the same deity.

7 It is a kind of dance performed to cure a man possessed of an evil spirit. The Vēlaṉ invokes the aid of Subrahmaṇya and is possessed by the God's spirit and thus exorcises the bad spirit out of the victim.

these mountains, comes, that exorcist is a fool. If
Murukaṉ will manifest Himself then He will be a greater
fool, even though He destroyed the Krauñca mountain.

'O good girl with the serrated bracelets! This also
provokes laughter in me. If the exorcist appointed to
remove the love-sickness caused by the chieftain of the
hill of exceeding fragrance, comes, that exorcist is a fool,
If the son of Śiva, seated under the banyan tree[1] manifests
Himself then He will be a greater fool.

'O good girl with the choice ornaments! This further
provokes my laughter. To expel my severe sickness caused
by the embrace of the lord of this mountain, if

the exorcist
comes, he is a fool indeed. And if my deity who wears
the garland of *kaṭappam*,[2] and the wintry blossoms, mani-
fests Himself, He is much more a fool than the exorcist
appointed to drive away my sickness.'

PĀṬṬUMAṬAI[3]

(The maid replied):

'The son of the god seated under the banyan tree
(Śiva) will come (riding) his peacock with his consort to
the courtyard where the appointed exorcist will perform
the *veṟiyāṭal*.[4] When he comes, we shall ask his blessing
on our marriage with the lord of this great mountain.[5]

1

Cf. Kalittokai, st. 81-3, Maṇi., canto iii, l. 144. The Dakṣiṇāmūrti form of Śiva is alluded to.

2 This flower blossoms during the rainy season.

3 Now follows the reply of the maid to the heroine. Invariably we notice the plural form used by the maid in all love-themes in Tamil literature. The idea underlying this is that the maid identifies herself with the heroine.

4 Cf. Puṛam, st. 22.

5 The reference is to the gāndharva form of marriage.

'O son of the god of Kailāsa hill![1] We worship Your feet that look like red *asoka* flowers, and also the youth-

ful daughter of the mountain folk, who has a crescent-
like forehead of the peacock's hue. We beseech you
to give us the hero in (a form of) marriage other than that
sanctioned by Brahmā.[2]

'We worship your two feet, O son of the daughter
of the mountain (Pārvatī)[3], with Vaḷḷi of the crescent-fore-
head, the youthful daughter of the Kuṟavas[4] dwelling in
this our ancient mountain. O great god! Make our hero
marry so that it may be known unto many.

'She is a Kuṟava lady. She is of our community.
With her we worship your two feet, you of the six faces!
May he, who touched your two holy feet and promised
to wed me, be blessed with a good

marriage, and be rid
of a disapproved union.'[5]

1 Legend has it that the abode of Siva is
hill, and hence Siva is known as Kailāsavāsi.

Kailāsa, the divine

2 The reference here is to the prājāpatya

form of marriage,
which shows that all the eight forms
of marriage prescribed by
Hindu law-codes were by this time known to the
Tamil land.

3 For the legend see the Matsya Purāṇa.
daughter of Himavān and Mēnā.

Umā is the

4 The Kuṟavas are a primitive tribe living

among hills and
mountains from prehistoric times.
They still linger in small
numbers leading the lives of nomads.

5 Here we see that the hero and heroine had already had a clandestine union of which there was idle talk among the villagers. There was fear on the part of the maid that if her

parents came to know of it, she would be taken to task. We seem to read in these stanzas the disadvantages of kaḷaviyal and the benefits of karpiyal. See Nālaṭiyār, st. 86.

KUNRAKKURAVAI

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PĀṬṬUMAṬAI

'When we were singing thus, the lord of our mountain
wearing a gorgeous garland, overheard us with sympathy
keeping himself hidden.[1] Before he would depart, I went
up to him, touched his revered feet with my hands and
stood praying to him. Long live you, friend, and listen to

what I said (to him).

'You came to this village wearing a *kaṭampa* garland and wielding a spear, for the sake of our damsel. But you have neither six faces nor a magnificent peacock; nor have you the Kurava girl (Vaḷḷi). Nor do you possess the Lord's well-knit shoulders. The people of these small hamlets will not recognize you as the god who is the wearer of the *kaṭampa* garland. Verily, they are ignorant folk.'

PĀṬṬUMAṬAI

'Thus then, having heard what I told him of the idle talk in our village, he became sad at heart, but quietly went away. It is likely that the lord of this mountain

country will (soon) marry you.

'We shall sing an appropriate song in honour of the chaste lady who is worshipped by many, who was shown her husband by groups of several Devas and who destroyed the glory of ancient Madura with her breast.

'We shall sing; come, live you long, friend; we shall sing.

1 What follows is the narration by the maid of what had happened when she was making the above remarks. The maid noticed that the hero was overhearing their conversation, and finding him slip away, she ran to him and requested him to marry the heroine in public. She noticed signs of sympathy on his part and opined that the proposed marriage would soon take place.

'We shall sing; come, live you long, friend; we shall sing.

'We shall sing in praise of her who burnt the city of Kūṭal of the tall mansions when its

righteous rule vanished. When we sing in praise of her who burnt (Madura), we shall (also) pray for the hand of the lord of these mountains in an honourable wedding.'[1]

With sympathy the chaste ladies praise and worship the pretty lady (Kaṇṇaki) in this fertile field of ours. Even after the Dēvas had with extolment restored this pretty lady (Kaṇṇaki) to her husband, they did not cease magnifying her greatness.

'Praised and worshipped by the Dēvas of the celestial regions, the lady who stood under the sweet-smelling *vēṅkai* of the forest-she who stood in the shade of the *vēṅkai* of the forest-attained her abode along with her husband in Heaven from which she will not be sent back.
If we sing in praise of her who will not be sent back from Heaven,[2] this village will also be granted a similar boon.[3]

'O, our village is blessed with a great

boon! It is blessed with a great boon. This village which is to witness the marriage of our lady of gold bangles with her husband, is blessed.

1 In anticipation of the early consummation of marriage the maid advised the heroine to worship the new deity, the Lady of Chastity, and be blessed by her, in the belief that Her blessing would not be in vain.

2 She has attained, in philosophical language, nirvāṇa.

3 The implication is that the blessing of the Lady of Chastity would not only benefit a particular individual but the whole community.

KUNRAKKURAVAI

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'In this way, while we were singing the song of praise for boons received, witnessing our *kuravai* dance[1] and our *koṇṭunilai*[2] song, our lover would come to this very place by His

blessing and enjoy the drink (of heroes). May he, the chief of the western country (Kuṭaku)[3] who carved the bow-emblem on the Himalays and ruled the Kolli[4] (in the south) live many days in happiness !'

1 This canto shows that kuravai was of different kinds of which at least two are mentioned in the Cilappatikāram. That which was perfomed by the women of the cowherds was in honour of Viṣhṇu, and that by the Hill-maidens in honour of Murukaṉ. We notice differences in their technique.

2 Koṇṭunilai is a kind of ceyyuḷ or song sung apparentiy to the accompaniment of the kuravai dance. This is evident from the Kalittokai, st. 39, and the commentary thereon.

3 The term kuṭavar-kō is important, and stands for the king of the western region of the Tamil land. It is worth noting that the ancient poets divided the whole Tamil land into three regions—west, east and south. At the head of the

eastern region was the Cōḷa, the Kuṇavar-kō, and of the south was the Pāṇṭya, Teṉṉavar-kō (See Patiṟṟu., st. 55 for the use of the term kuṭavar-kō).

4 The Caṅkam classics refer to Kolli in their addresses to the Cēra (see, for example, Puṟanāṉūṟu, st. 22; Akanāṉūṟu., st. 209; Patiṟṟu., st. 73). From this we can deduce that the Kolli-malai formed an important portion of the ancient Cēra kingdom.

CANTO XXV

KATCIK KATAI

OR

THE DECISION TO MARCH NORTH

WHEN the prince of the powerful sword, the son of
the Cēra,[1] who to the astonishment of the Dēvas,
destroyed the *kaṭampu* fenced in by the deep sea, and
who carved his bow-emblem on the

Himalayas, stayed happily in his silver-white palace beside the (artificial) fountain, with his consort Iḷaṅkō-Vēṇmāḷ,[2] he expressed a desire to go and see the mountain, whose groves were surrounded by clouds, and the music of whose waterfalls resembled an ever-sounding tabor.

Thereupon he left the neighbourhood of Vañci accompanied by a large retinue of women spread over an extensive route so that he appeared like Indra of the mighty spear, who desirous of sporting with the divine damsels dwelling in the grove, rich in the wealth of

1 Akam., st. 127, 347. The reference is to Cēralātan. See

patikam. Cf. Akam., st. 396. The Cēra line is mythically traced to Heaven.

2 Seṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's queen. It would appear that she belonged to the line of Vēḷir who reigned in later days from Koṭumpālūr in the Pudukottai State. (See Pudukkottai Inscriptions. Also Ep. Rep., No. 315 of 1903, and 1908, pp. 87-9.) Similar names Irukkuvēḷ, Iruṅkōvēḷ and Iḷaṅkōvēḷ are found in the inscriptions. The Koṭumpālūr line is a branch of the ancient Vēḷir dynasty that was flourishing in the days of the Caṅkam epoch (see M. Raghava Aiyangar, Cēraṉ-Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, p. 24, and Cēravēntar tāyavaḷakku, pp. 35-6).

his flowers, mounted his great elephant (Airāvata)[1] and spread his retinue over a

distance of one hundred and forty *yōjaṉas*, in a region of golden-flowered trees, wide stretching river-banks, islets set in sparkling waters, groves edged with young trees, play-houses and assembly halls.

With his suite he reached the bank spread with fine
sand dunes from the Pēriyār river,[2] which falls from the
great mountain and appears like a garland on the breast
of Viṣhṇu. Its flowing waters were covered with fully
blossomed *koṅku*, *vēṅkai*, *koṉṟai* in overhanging clusters,
as well as with *nākam*, *tilakam*, and fragrant *āram*, around
which swarms of bees and beetles were murmuring their
sweet songs. Here he stayed at ease.

Everywhere could be heard the songs of the hill-women

accompanying the dances proper to each region, the music

of the priest[3] (Vēlaṉpāṇi) in honour of the victorious God

of the red lance, the *vaḷḷai* song sung to the pounding of

the grain, the shrill shouting of the guards in the *tiṉai*-

fields, the clamour of the Kuṟavar as they broke open honey-combs, the heavy drum-beat of waterfalls, the trumpeting of elephants attacking tigers, the loud high-

1 Indra's elephant.

2 This is Poṉṉāṉi (Sanskrit, Pūrṇavāhinī) which takes its source in the Anaimalai Hills. See Pandit R. Raghava Aiyangar's Vañjimānakar, p. 54.

3 Here are depicted the customs and the habits of the hill people. Their priest was named Vēlaṉ. They trapped elephants and gathered honey. In addition to ordinary watchmen it appears that there were guard-stations, made by erecting huts in the thick branches of lofty trees where men were stationed to raise a hue and cry whenever they anticipated danger from wild animals or their enemies.

pitched voices of the watchmen (*sēṉōṉ*) in their lofts, the

noises of mahouts as they trapped elephants in the *kheda*,

besides the clangour of his promenading army.

Then there appeared before him the hill-folk like vanquished kings,[1] laden with tribute, awaiting his audience in the court at flourshing Vañci, rich in rare articles. They came carrying on their heads such presents[2] as: the white tusks of elephants, loads of *akil*, whisks of deer-hair, pots of honey, chips of sandalwood, lumps of red *sindura*, loads of *añjana* and beautiful *aritāra*, cardamom stalks, pepper stalks, *kūvainūṟu* (arrowroot flour), luxuriant *kavalai*, ripe cocounts, delicious mangoes, garlands of green leaves (*paccilai*), jack-fruits, garlic, sugarcane, flowery creepers, rich bunches of areca-nuts from luxuriant palms, bunches of the big variety of sweet plantains, *āḷi* cubs, lion cubs, tiger cubs, young rutting elephants, young monkeys, bear cubs, *varuṭai* deer that

roam the hillsides, fawns of the timid deer, fawns of the musk deer, harmless little mongooses, peacocks with beautiful feathers, *nāvi* kittens (civet cats), wild hens, and parrots with their honeyed words.

They said: 'We have been your slaves for seven generations. Long live your prowess! Under the forest *vēṅkai* tree a lady with a breast plucked out, suffered unequalled distress; but celebrated by celestials she ascended to Heaven. The celestials praised her. We do not know which is her native place, and whose daughter she is.

1 This demonstrates that there were a number of tributary kings to the Cēra, who was the *de facto* overlord

of the Tamil
country. It appears that the tributes were generally paid in kind.

Cf. Perumkatai, Bk. I, ch. lviii. ll. 83-99.

2 Here we are furnished with a list of fauna and flora of the mountain.

But we know that she came to your country. May your line last for several hundred years!'

Thereat the great Tamil scholar Śāttan,[1] who had been witnessing with wonder and joy (all that was happen- ing), addressed the king, the delight of the world and the wielder of the long spear, thus: 'Listen, O great and powerful king! I shall tell you what happened to the lady of lustrous bangles, and to her dear husband, as a result of an ill-fated anklet. I will also tell you how that beautiful women took her anklet and pleaded before the king of

powerful troops, and also how the great and ancient city of Madura was razed by the rising flames from the un- developed breast of that great lady of chastity, who threw her fair anklet before the queen and left her in wrath declaiming thus: "O lady of the five-plaited hair! Know this: 'The Pāṇṭyaṉ king, who sat on the lion-throne wear- ing Lakṣhmī in his breast, fainted and died, unable to resolve the perplexity of the lady of flower-wreaths.'' Without waiting to hear Kaṇṇaki's heroic words in full but not uneasy in mind although unable to support her great sorrow, the noble queen touched his flowery feet and fell dead, saying: "Let me go the way my lord has gone"—as if her soul sought the departed one.

'As if it were her intention to point out to you, and to tell you, O mighty king, the nature of the injustice per- petrated by the powerful Pāṇṭyaṉ, (Kaṇṇaki) came to your kingdom, not (wishing) to return alone to her own

1 Cittalai Cāttaṉār, the author of the epic Maṇimēkalai. Here is unquestionable internal evidence that Śāttaṉār and Iḷaṅgō- Aṭikaḷ were contemporaries, and that both the Maṇimēkalai and the Cilappatikāram are not romances but are historical documents portraying contemporary political and social life in the Tamil land.
Cāttaṉ was an eye-witness to what happened in Madura.

native place. O king, may your rule of great fame prosper from aeon to aeon!'[1]

When he heard of the cruel deed of the king of the Pāṇṭyaṉ country, the Cēra, the king of kings, was anguish- ed and said: 'Before these words, which well deserve condemnation from any monarch of our status, reached our ears, it is good that the Pāṇṭyan laid down his

life. For it is the departing soul of the king that has straightened the righteous sceptre,[2] which was bent by this irresistible act of destiny.

'If rains fail, great havoc is caused (to the country). If living beings suffer unrighteousness, widespread fear is caused. Paying due regard to the welfare of his subjects, and wary of tyrannical rule, a protecting king[3] born of a noble line occupies a position which is but suffering and is not to be sought after.'

The king spoke thus gracefully to the learned poet who had graphically narrated the tale of woe, and said to his queen: 'One chaste lady lost her life in peace when her husband died. The other in wrath came to our kingdom.

Of these two, O fascinating lady, speak, who is better ?'

1 Cf. Maduraikkāñci, l. 194.

2 In simple words : hitherto the sceptre had been straight- but an unjust act made it bend. The king's voluntary death, how, ever, removed the stigma attached to it and made it once more a righteous sceptre.

3 The responsibilities of a king are emphasized here by the author. These lines follow the Sanskrit law-codes where the king is ordained to discharge his duties without any regard to rights. The ancient kings did their duty first and then claimed their right. Even an autocratic ruler like Rāvaṇa followed svadharma. (Rāmāyaṇa, 'Yud'., ch. lxiii.)

When the monarch said this, the great queen

replied:[1] 'Let the (Pāṇṭyaṉ) queen whose soul departed before she experienced the agony of surviving her husband, enjoy the great bliss of Heaven! And let this Goddess of Chastity who has come to our extensive country be duly honoured.'

The king with the garlanded white umbrella, approved these words and turned towards his learned councillors when they said: 'Either from the Potiyil hills of immortal renown, or from the great Himalayas where the bow- emblem has been carved, a stone should be brought to fashion her image. Both are equally sacred because one is washed by the floods of the Kāvēri and the other by the holy Ganges.'

The monarch replied: 'It is no matter for felicitation if kings born in my family of great swords and high valour, be satisfied merely with picking up a stone from the Potiyil hills and cleansing it in the waters of the ancient Kāvēri.[2] If the king of the high mountains

(Himalayas),
where live the twice-born[3] Brahmanas[4] distinguishable by their matted locks of hair,

undried garments, three-stringed

1 This shows that the queen also took part in the deilbera- tions of the State. We know from the Rāmāyaṇa that Maṇṭōtari went to Rāvaṇa's court after the death of Prahasta, and dissuaded him by several arguments from fighting Rāmā. (See Dikshitar, Hindu Administrative Institutions, p. 160).

2 This proves beyond doubt that a part of the Kāvēri region belonged to the Cēra Kingdom. It may be noted that the Kāvēri which is seven miles from Vañcikkaruvūr is as much the Cēra river as it is the Cōḷa.

3 Dvijas of Sanskrit literature.

4 Some of the habits and customs of Brahmanas are men- tioned here.

sacred threads on their chests,

and the strength of their

three sacrificial fires, does not give us the stone needed

to carve an image of the great Lady of Chastity, then we,

wearing our *vañci* garland from the south, shall demonstrate

to those who have survived those already dead, the insta-bility (*kāñci*)[1] of infamous lives which do not pursue the ordained path, the bridal *kāñci*[2] indicative of the giving in marriage of the ever-youthful girl (Umā) born in the ancient family to the moon-crested Dēva (Śiva), and the great *kāñci*,[3] to the opposing northern (king). We shall deprive him (the Himalayas) of his high crown, resplendent like the moon, and shining with a victory-giving garland of *mandāra* flowers strung together with full-blown *vēṅkai* blossoms. We shall look to all this.'

With these words, he adorned his

elephant-soldiers

with *vañci* garlands, celebrating the auspicious day when

the umbrella was taken out (*kutainilaivañci*),[4] the glorious

success of the Cēra (*korravañci*),[5] the high distinction

of earning the perpetual title the *mahārājya*,[6] the great and

1 This is kāñci-tiṇai, a major theme describing a warrior

defending his position, wearing a garland of kāñci flowers. (See

Tolk., 'Purat', sūtra 24).

2 Makatpār Kāñci. See Pura., veṇpāmālai iv, st. 24.

3 Etirūnrutal is 'to take a firm stand for making an attack'

(Tamil Lexicon p. 525). Cf. Pinkalantai 'Vatkar'—etirūnral

kāñci).

4 'Theme of a king sending the royal umbrella in advance

In an aus picious hour before he actually sets out on an expedi-

tion' (Puṟa., veṇpāmālai iii, st. 3). See also Tamil Lexicon.

5 'Theme extolling a king who destroyed his foes with his

sword' (Puṟa., veṇpāmālai iii, st. 7).

Mārāyavañci is a theme indicating the status of overlord- ship after vanquishing the enemy. See Tolk., 'Puṟat', sūtra 8,

comm. by Iḷampūraṇar:

cf, Puṟa., veṇpāmālai iii, st. 11).

glorious *vañci* (*peruvañci*)[1] victory, and the unmatched fame achieved by the supply of large quantities of food (*perumcōṟṟuvañci*)[2] and lastly, the triumphant *vaḷḷai* of everlasting glory (*koṟṟavaḷḷai*).[3] He made his war-attired

army wear garlands of
unbroken palmyra leaves, and exhorted them saying: 'Outside the golden city of un-flowering Vañci[4], we shall wear the *vañci* garlands[5] so that
they may keep company with our fierce swords.'

Villavaṉ Kōtai (his minister), then addressed the king: 'May your righteous rule last many years! You fought against your equals who surrendered their tiger-flag and fish-flag on the bloody battlefield of Konkaṉ.[6]
stationed

This (incident) has reached the ears of elephants in the eight directions.[7] My eyes will

never forget the sight of your advancing elephant in the midst of Tamil hosts which destroyed the joint forces of

1. Peruvañci is yet another theme (Puṟa.. veṇpāmālai iii, st. 22) treating of setting fire to the enemy's country.

2 Perumcorruvañci is what the Tolkāppiyam styles perumcorrunilai; 'Poruḷ', 63. (See also Puṟa., veṇpāmālai iii, st. 23.) It is a theme treating of a king feasting his soldiers sumptuously on the eve of a battle.

3 Korravaḷḷai is 'a theme indirectly describing the prowess of a king by regretting that the enemy's country will be destroyed' (Tamil Lexicon, p. 1167). See Puṟa., veṇpāmālai iii, st. 7; also Tolk., 'Puṟat', sūtra 8.

4 Cf. Puṟam., st. 100; also st. 22 and st. 27.

5 Here is a pun on the word vañci. The city is ever young and can never become old on account of the monarch's prowess.

6 The Cēra defeated the Pāṇṭya and the Cōḷa monarchs. and became the overlord of the Tamil country.

7 Diggajas of Sanskrit mythology.

Koṅkaṇar, Kalingar, the cruel Karunāṭar,
Bangalar,[1] Gan- gar, Kaṭṭiyar[2] famous for their
innumerable spears, and the northern Aryas.

'Nor can we forget the valour
you displayed singlehanded, when having made

your mother bathe in the full and rising floods of the mighty Ganges,[3] you waged such a terrific war against a thousand Aryas, that the cruel God of Death stood aghast.

'If you now propose to extend the Tamil sway over
the entire region fenced in by the roaring sea, there will be
none in the whole world who can stop you from doing it. So send a message to the following effect: "The object with
which our king goes to the Himalayas is to bring a stone on which to carve the image of a deity." Seal it with your clay seal[4] bearing
the designs of the strong bow, the fish

1 The enemy kings of the Cera king. The Bangalar are probably the people of Bengal. The Gangar may be the early Gangas.

2 The Kaṭṭis seemed to have occupied the region, south of Vaṭukarpūmi. They are frequently mentioned in the Akanāṉūṟu (st. 44 and st. 226) and also in Kuṟuntokai, st. 11.

3

This shows that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ had already been to North India once and shown his prowess. From a vague reference in the Puṟanāṉūṟu (st. 62 and 63) that when Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's father and others fell slain in battle their women also committed sati, it is argued that this expedition of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was to secure a stone on which to carve an image of his mother. Against this theory must be set the fact that (1) there is no implicit reference to the sati of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's mother, (2) that there is no reference, explicit or implied, of a stone for an image, and (3) that accord- ing to Arumpatavuraiāciriyar it pilgrimage for a sacred bath. means that she was taken on a

4 Note the use of the clay seal for letters of administrative importance. It is of interest that similar seals have been dis-

covered among the recent pre-historic finds in the Indus valley.

and the tiger, emblems of the Tamil country, and send it to all the kings of the north.'

Thareupon Aḷumpilvēḷ[1] replied:

'The spies of all countries situated in the cool shade of
the *nāval* tree (i.e. *Jambūdvipa* or India) never leave the
borders of our protecting (capital) Vañci.[2] Will not these
spies send information to their respective kings famous for
elephants with ornamental trappings? So, it will be
enough if we proclaim (your expedition) by tom-tom in
our own city.'

The king of the troop irresistible in

battle (Ceṅkuṭṭu-
van) agreed. When he reached the
glorious unfadable
city of Vañci, rich with tribute obtained
from expeditions
against enemies, it was proclaimed throughout
that magni-
ficent city by
the beat of a drum carried on the nape of
the strong elephant of state.[3]

'Long live our gracious king! May he
protect the
world from age to age. Because our
guardian monarch
marches forth to procure a stone from the
great Himalayas
inscribed with the bow-emblem, all ye who
are kings of
the northern countries, come forth
to meet him with
tributes. Save yourselves,
by remembering (before it

is too late) the heroic exploit of our monarch who overthrew

1 Aḷumpilvēḷ was apparently a Vēḷir chieftain of a small area called Aḷumpil. In this sense the word occurs in Caṅkam works like the Akanāṉūṟu, st. 44 and Maturaikkāñci, ll. 344-5.

2 This proves the extensive nature of the spy system explained in the Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra and the Tirukkuṟaḷ.

3 A feature of dharma-yuddha, (the dharma-vijaya of the Arthaśāstra and of Aśōkan inscriptions). This was to inform everyone concerned beforehand.

the *kaṭampu* of the sea,[1] and his equally heroic deed of carving the bow-emblem on the Himalayan slopes.[2] If you will not listen, abandon your wives and lead the lives of anchorites. Long live the army,[3] precious as his own face to the king who wears victorious anklets.'

1 See above, canto xxiii, ll. 81-2.

2 There is a special reference to Ceṅkuṭṭuvan's planting the emblem of the bow on the Himalayas in the Cirupāṇārruppaṭal, ll. 47-50.

3 The term sēnāmukham is a Sanskrit expression and means generally a division of an army. In military literature it may also mean a division of the army consisting of three elephants, three chariots, nine horsemen and fifteen footmen.

CANTO XXVI

KALKOT KATAI

OR

BRINGING THE STONE

AFTER the tom-tom[1] had been
sounded, the king
mounted his ancestral lion-throne when the
purōhita,[2] the
chief astrologer, the celebrated ministers, and
army com-
manders gathered together and blessed
him : 'Long live
our king of kings.' They requested him
to indicate to them
the royal intention (to march) in the
(northern) direction.
The Cera of the white umbrella,

which rose higher
than that of all the rival kings of great armies,
declared publicly thus: 'If the remarks of the kings of
the north, who lead insecure lives, communicated to me
by saints residing in the Himalayas, when they came here,
are to be passed over in silence, that will cause humiliation
to kings such as ourselves. So, if my unfailing sword
does not successfully help me to make the northern kings
carry on their crowned heads the stone on which the deity's
image is to be carved, and if I fail to strike terror into the
hearts of my enemy-kings who are ardently war-like and
who wear glittering anklets, may I become

the wielder

1 See below, canto xxix, 'Uralppāṭṭumaṭai'.

2 The purōhita was an important limb of the State and was a member of the ministry. This reminds us of the status he occupied in the Arthaśāstra polity, where it is said that the arms of the Kṣatriya aided by the science of the Brahmana attain success. The technical term is aśān (Sans., Ācārya). (Ar. Śās, Bk. I, ch. 3).

of a sceptre striking terror in the subjects of my own fertile regions.'

The *ācāṉ* then said:

'O mighty conqueror in battle!

These remarks apply only to kings (the Cōḷa and the Pāṇṭya) wearing garlands of *ār* and margosa flowers, and beautiful jewelled crowns. O Imayavarampa! Is there any monarch who dares to defy your wrath?[1] They meant no insult to you; so curb your anger.'

At this the astrologer versed in the five *kēḷvis*,[2] who

knew the effects of the planets in each of the twelve signs

of the zodiac,[3] rose up and said: 'Powerful king! Long

live your valour! The time is now auspicious for making

the rulers of this vast earth prostrate themselves before

your beautiful lotus-feet. Prepare to start out in that

direction which you intend to follow.'

When the monarch of unfailing success heard this, he

ordered that his sword and umbrella should be taken

northward. Then to the accompaniment of cheers from
the *Porunar*,[4] the war drum made a deafening noise, so as
to cause Ātiśeṣa, bearer of the weighty earth,

to bend down

1 Cf. Kuraḷveṇpā 773.

2 Titi, Vāram, Nakṣatram, Yōgam and Karaṇam. Also
Naṭpu (ally), Āṭci (success), Uccam (leading to glory), Pakai
(enemy), and Nicam (leading to dishonour).

3 This shows the development of astronomy in the Tamil
land and the blind faith of the people in the effects of the move-
ments of planets on individuals and the State. Mauttikaṉ (Sans.,
Mauhūrtika) is the technical term for the astrologer.

4 Bards who encouraged and cheered an

army. That such a system was in vogue, even with regard to Aryan warfare, is testified to by the dramatist Bhāsa and the statesman Kauṭalya.

Here it was the purōhita who instilled enthusiasm into the minds of the soldiers. (See Hindu

Administrative Institutions, p. 294).

his head.[1] Jewelled lamps dispelled the darkness of the night; and (lifting up) their ranks of closely flying banners, the striking-force, the five great assemblies and the eight great groups, the *purōhita* in the service of the king rich in fierce horses and elephants, financiers, upholders of

dharma, and executive officers, all spoke (with one voice):

'Long live the ruler of the whole earth.'[2]

His sword of increasing martial repute and garlanded
white umbrella were then placed on the nape of the great
elephant[3] accustomed to swallowing large balls of rice,
and taken outside to their appointed places near the
fortified walls.[4] Then the monarch who was distinguished
by a garland of palmyra leaves intertwined with perfect
vañci flowers, entered his assembly hall, and entertained
to a grand feast[5] the leaders of the great troops who were
clamorous and eager for vigorous warfare.

The sovereign lord of the sharp sword, decorated his

crown of gems with *vañci* blossoms from the unflowering

Vañci when the morning drum sounded at the gate, announcing the time for other kings of the earth[6]

to pay their

1 The reference is to the legend of the serpent Ātiśēṣa bearing the heavy weight of the earth.

2 The blessings of the officers of the State on the eve of the march of the army.

3 Paṭṭavarttaṉam was the name of the State elephant.

4 Preliminaries on the eve of the march

of the army. Belief

in an auspicious hour was universal and the parasthānam prayers show the prevalence of superstitious ideas.

and

5 It is to be noted that the feast was given in the night. See, for an explanation of the term perumcoru, canto xxv, l. 144. and n. 6.

6 A reference to the time for meeting subordinate chieftains.

tributes. With the victorious *vañci*-wreath were worn the sandals of the great God in whose form the whole universe manifests itself (Śiva), and who wears the crescent in His long, dark matted hair; and having laid the head that bowed to none (else) at His holy shrine,[1] he cir- cumambulated it. The sweet fumes from the sacrificial fires[2] offered by the Vedic Brahmanas deprived his garland of its lustrous colour. He then mounted the

proud war-elephant.

nape of his

There appeared before him some persons bearing the *pracātam* of the Lord (Vişhņu) who slumbers[3] in a (yogic) trance at Āṭakamāṭam[4] and addressed him with

1 This shows that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was a follower of the orthodox religion which consisted in the worship of Śiva and Vişhņu, without any sectarian bias. The temple under reference must have been the Paśupati-Kōil of the present Karūr.

2 Here is a clear reference to the religion followed by the Cēra monarch. It was the Vaidika religion, an important feature of which was the fire-rite. This shows that the Brahmanas of those days were largely engaged in performing Vēdic sacrifices, and were agnihōtrins and hence Dikṣitars in the real sense of the term.

3 This refers to the yōganidra of Vişhņu as the Purāṇas.

mentioned in

4 The identification of Āṭakamāṭam with the Padmanābhasvāmi temple at Trivandrum by the commentator Arumpatavuraiāciriyar is unconvincing. (See also K. G. Sesha Aiyar's views in J. I. H., 1932, pp. 135-63).

Āṭakamāṭam is probably a reference to the Vaishṇava temple that is now found in the suburb of Karūr. For it is a far cry from Trivandrum to the capital Vañci. To have carried the prasāṭam all that way would have taken several days in those times of slow communication and difficult transport. It is impossible to think that the news of the march had reached distant Trivandrum and made the temple authorities go post-haste even to Cranganore for

benedictory words: May success attend on Kuṭṭuvan,[1] the lord of the west!' Since the king had already placed on

his crown of gems the beautiful sandals of the Lord whose
matted hair bears the Gangā, he received this *pracātam*
and carried it on his fair, bejewelled shoulders.

As he thus gloriously set forth, the dancing-girls
who had gathered in the different theatres

appeared with
clasped arms and said: 'O conquering
monarch! May you
under the shadow of your white umbrella on
your elephant
with its forehead decked with *vākai*,
tumpai and *pōntai*,
present so delightful a sight as to cause our
to become loosened.'[2]
lustrous bangles

On the one side Māgada poets,[3]
Vaitāḷikas and Sūtas
praised his success in the field of battle; on
the other,
elephant warriors, cavalry captains and soldiers
with shin-
ing swords,[4]
celebrated the might of the royal sword.

the sake of argument, or to Karūr, to bless that king. It is remarkable that there is no trace of such a Vaishṇava temple near or about Cranganore.

1 Kuṭṭuvaṉ is apparently a title adopted by Imayavarampaṉ after he had extended his sway to the Kuṭṭanāṭu, and in the same way the Kuṭakkō implies that the Cēra was also the lord of the western country. It may be noted in passing that these two nāṭus, the Kuṭa-nāṭu and the Kuṭṭa-nāṭu, are portions of the Kaṭaṉmalaināṭu which formed a large division of the ancient Cēra empire.

2 The implication is that they are soon to be separated from their lovers.

3 (Sans., Māgadha.) The presence of Māgadhas and the Sūtas was a North Indian convention. Their function was to glorify the king in season and out of season. Cf. Ar. Śās., Bk. X, ch. 3.

4 The foot-soldiers were often enlisted from the Maṟavar class who were a virile and hardy tribe.

C—38

(In this manner) the monarch left Vañci, like Indra eaving his celestial city to attack the Asuras. The eaders of the army and the advance guard of his forces, which seemed to have spread to the very shores of the foaming sea, made the backs of the mountains bend (beneath their weight) and caused the plains to quake. He marched thus with his prancing steeds and decorated chariot corps, till he reached the outskirts of the blue mountain (Nilagiri).[1] There the swaying elephants, the chariots, the horses and the veteran foot-soldiers stayed in a camp (*pāṭi*) protected by zealous guards. The king, resplendent as the sun, graced Mother Earth with his holy feet, and as he went to his great chamber he received the praises of his able warriors.

Afterwards, prompted by a desire to see this ruler of the vast earth who was like Indra[2] in wealth, saints moving in the sky left for the royal assembly and appeared with their bodies flashing like lightning. The monarch rose up and rendered them obeisance,[3] whereupon they said: 'Listen, O Cēra born in Vañci through

the grace of Śiva[4] of the matted hair! We are going to the Malaya (Potiyil) hills. It is your duty to protect the learned Brahmanas who live there, O great king!' They then blessed him and departed. Soon after appeared the

1 The army halted at the Nilgiri hills.

2 The comparison of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ with Indra who went to attack the Asuras, shows the influence exerted by Sanskrit legends in the Tamil land.

3 This statement is appropriate to the Purāṇic tradition that the Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Kinnaras and others used to fly in the air. As they were supposed to be divine beings, they were

also worshipped.

4 Here is further evidence to establish the personal religion of the Cēra King.

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dancers from the Konkaṇa country,[1] exclaiming: 'Long live the lord of the sea-girt earth!' The fierce Karuṇāṭar in their respective dresses and ornaments, and actresses whose dark curly hair was loosely woven with shining garlands, whose incipient breasts were adorned with (jewelled) chains and whose long eyes resembled dark carps, sang thus in the *pāṇivari*:[2]

'The black koels send forth their note: the bees pro- duce the music of the *yāḻ*! The summer, when buds bloom, has come! Yet our lover has not appeared.'

Next came the people from the Kuṭaku country, with their (dancing) girls, possessors of fine bangles and carp-like long eyes. They celebrated in song the *kuravai*[3] peculiar to winter, thus :

'O lady wearing bangles of fine workmanship ! Put on your jewellery; watch the moment; the clouds gather rapidly with loud thunder-claps. The chariot in which my lover rode has returned. He has finished his work.'

The Ōvar[4] also came blessing the

king : 'May our king with the mighty sword

bring his expedition to a 1 The kingdoms reference.

of Konkaṇ and Karuṇāṭaka are under

2 Pāṇivari was the song sung during summer by the heroine who expected the arrival of her lover.

3 Kārkkuravai is a kind of dancing and music appropriate to the winter season. Here it may be noted that at one and the same time while it was summer in Konkaṇ it was winter in Kuḍagu which bears testimony to the author's accurate geographical

knowledge. It is also worth noting that this is the third kind of kuravai mentioned in this classic. The other two already noticed are Ācciyarkuravai and Kunrakkuravai.

4 Ōviyar, a tribe. Arumpatavuraiāciriyar speaks of them as ēttālar (panegyrists). This is not convincing as panegyrists have already been mentioned.

successful end[1] and live long with his flourishing circle
of friends and followers.'

The wielder of the lance that made his enemies quake
rewarded those who praised (him), in the manner ordain-
ed by the master of dances,[2] with rare ornaments of which
they had no knowledge. When he rested, the gate-keeper
came and reported: 'O king of the righteous sceptre, and

of the lofty standard with the bow-emblem! One hundred
and two actresses, and two hundred and eight accompany-
ing singers, and one hundred jesters who are adepts in
the ninety-six modes of *pāsaṇṭa*;[3] one hundred lofty
chariots,[4] five hundred spirited elephants,
ten thousand steeds with trimmed manes,
twenty thousand carts laden
with different kinds of merchandise[5] from the northern
country unknown to other places, with their contents
marked by pictographs, and lastly a thousand *kañcukas*[6]

1 Literally, 'finish the work assigned to his sword'.

2 An officer of the State (perhaps in charge of fine arts like music and dancing).

3 Ninety-six kinds of pāṣaṇḍas are distinguished. There is nothing to corroborate this in Sanskrit literature. Apparently there were a number of heretical sects.

4 The numerical strength of the army and commissariat which followed Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ in his northern expedition.

5 Here is evidence of the use of the Indus script and the Egyptian script in the ancient Tamil land, implying a large volume of trade between these countries and the far south of India.

6 Kañcukamākkaḷ, literally, 'men attired in splendid dress.' From the context we gather, that they were messengers of whom different kinds are distinguished. Kañcukin was an important character in Sanskrit dramas. He was generally an attendant on the harem, or a chamberlain, and usually an aged Brahmana. See Vikramōr., Act III, sc. 1. and Śākuntala, Act V, sc. 3.

with well-coiffured heads, under the
yan,[1] have arrived at the gate.'

leadership of Cañca-

The king said: 'Let the
dancing–girls, the great officials, and musicians,
both vocal and instrumental, come
hither along with Cañcayan.' Cañcayan
splendid assembly hall of the righteous

then entered the
king, made his
obeisance, and after praising him in many
ways, he introduced to him in order the
most distinguished officials, and also the

hundred and two players, and addressed him thus: 'O king wielding the righteous sceptre! The Nūṟṟuvar Kaṉṉar[1] who have no differences with you and are quite friendly, have said: "If the expedition to the north by the Cera king is intended to select a stone to carve the figure of a deity upon, we will take a stone from the lofty Himalayas, bathe it in the rushing currents of the Ganges, and bring it to him. We are capable of doing this." May you live long to rule over the sea-girt earth.'

The protecting king whose ocean-like army could devour the lives of enemy-kings possessing victorious lances, said in reply: 'Balakumara's sons, Kaṉaka and

1 The chief ambassador was Cañcayaṉ.

2 It is difficult to interpret this term. The difficulty lies in deciding whether the expression stands for a certain individual or a group of individuals. If it is singular number, it may refer to King Śātakarṇi. Taking it in the plural, Pandit M. Raghava Ayyangar identifies them with the chiefs of Mālva. Considering the fact (which the Cilappatikāram warrants) the Nūṟṟuvar Kaṉṉar had the command of both banks of the Ganges, meaning that their sway extended to E. Mālva, and the fact of the Mālva chief being present at the consecration ceremony of Pattiṉitēvi, it is reasonable to assume that an Andhra king is under reference, and that he was an ally of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ.

Vijaya,[1] and other northern monarchs, with unrestrained tongues[2] on the occasion of a royal banquet spoke disparagingly and in ignorance of the valour of Tamil kings. With exceeding wrath, even like the God of Death, this army marches forth.[3] Therefore instruct the Nūṟṟuvar Kaṉṉar and tell them to prepare for us a great fleet of boats in order that we may cross the sacred Ganges.[4]

After Cañcayaṉ had gone away, the *kañcukamākkaḷ*, a thousand in number, who were faultless in speech, brought

chips of sandalwood and pearls from the deep sea together

with tributes dispatched by the Pāṇṭyaṉ:[4] then the

guardian king directed his pictographic scribes to send,

through them, letters (of acknowledgement) sealed with

clay, to all those kings.[5]

After (the messengers) had left (for their respective

destinations) the ruler of the sea-girt earth received the

praises of the chief officials in charge of different local

units, broke up his camp and marched to the holy Ganges

which he crossed,
on the fleet of boats supplied by the

Kaṉṉar, to the northern bank where they welcomed him.

Passing beyond that region also he proceeded to the

1 For a probable identification, see K. G Sesha Ayyar's article on 'The Date of Cilappatikāram' in the Madras Christian College Magazine, 1917.

2 Cf. Kuraḷveṇpā 127.

3 It is interesting to note that royal banquets were held, recalling modern State banquets. The Arumpatavurai interprets the term virundiṉ maṉṉar as 'new kings'. In this case the meaning is that 'Kaṉaka and Vijaya and other new kings spoke thus in a meeting.'

4 This shows that the Pāṇṭyaṉ king was a subordinate chieftain of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ.

5 This institution answers to the lekhaka of the Arthaśāstra.

uttara[1] country of the enemy hemmed in by a vast expanse of water, and with his army entered the camp near the battlefield.

Confronted with such a warrior,

Uttaraṉ (Sans. Uttara), Vicittiraṉ (Vicitra), Uruttiraṉ (Rudra), Bairvaṉ (Bhairava), Cittiraṉ (Citra), Śingaṉ (simha), Taṉuttaraṉ (Dhanurdhara), Śivētaṉ (Śivēta), and other kings of the north, along with Kaṉaka and Vijaya marched at the head of a confederate army vast as the ocean, saying: 'Let us see the prowess of the southern Tamil kings.' When they advanced thus Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ inwardly rejoiced, even as a hungry lion in search of prey would rejoice at the sight of a herd of elephants, and sprang upon the different forces of the enemy decorated with *kāñci* garlands. The *pandal* of flags swallowed the sun's rays;

the earth (the

battlefield) re-echoed to the sounds of the cruel drums covered with well-tanned skins, white conches, roaring drums, long horns and sweet cymbals (*pāṇṭil*),[2] reinforced by the all-pervading thunder of the royal war-drum with its hairy covering[3] seeming to devour lives given in sacrifice.

At that time the volume of dust raised by archers with

bows on their shoulders, by soldiers with fierce spears in

their hands, by warriors with leather shields, by mighty

chariot-warriors, by elephant-men on their

white-tusked

1 What territory actually constituted this uttara country is

difficult to say. Perhaps it is a reference to of the Ganges.

the territory north

2 A reference to certain martial musical instruments.

3 It was the custom to have the royal drum covered with the skin of a powerful bull which had vanquished a tiger by sheer prowess. The hair was not removed from the skin. (See Civakacintāmaṇi, st. 2899 and Maturaikkāñci, ll. 732-3.)

elephants, and by fleet horsemen, spread over that vast
region blindfolding the people and choked the clappers
of the bells hanging from the necks of the war-elephants,
and the loud-toned conches attached to the stately
standards – which prevented them from striking more
terror.

The vanguard of one army came in close contact with
the other and confusion prevailed. Heads and shoulders

were cut off and separated when the archers gathered
the dead bodies into heaps. The headless bodies (*kavan-*
tam)[1] of the (soldiers) cut off by the sword, danced
keeping time to the music of female ghosts, whose eyes
resembled one-faced drums. Female goblins formed
themselves in groups and danced drinking the blood
gushing from the carcasses mixed with human flesh.

The valorous soldiers of the Arya (northern) kings celebrated for their death-dealing chariot forces, were thus slain and piled upon the battlefield; the tops of their lofty chariots, as well as their massive fighting elephants and the groups of swift-footed horses, were destroyed and piled together in heaps[2] by the Cera with the brilliant anklet, who pompously wore on his high crown a fitting garland of
tumpai[3] flowers intermixed with palmyra leaves, and

showed himself to the Arya kings in the battlefield like
the God of Death riding fast on his buffalo[4] to swallow
up all lives within a day.

1 See Paṭṭiṉappālai, l. 236 and ll. 256-60 Cf. Matsya Purāṇa, ch. 50.

2 The term nūḻilāṭṭu means killing in large numbers and piling up the carcasses. See Malaipaṭu, st. 87. comm

3 Tumpai was an emblem of unique victory.

4 Mahiṣa is the steed of the God of Death.

The mighty spearmen Kaṉaka and Vijaya who bore
angry spears in their hands and their fifty-two able chariot warriors who had spoken insultingly of the Tamil kings, now tell a prey to the fury of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ. Some others dressed their hair in coiled plaits, some wore ascetic robes, some smeared themselves with ashes, some looked like anchorites seated on pedestals with peacock's feathers, some as minstrels, some with musical instruments on their shoulders, and some as dancers threw away their swords and went to different regions in suitable disguises.

But those who had to guard the accoutred elephants shook with fear. These animals Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ yoked like mere oxen, and using swords as sticks, he brought down the sheaf (the enemy) and by beating threshed it.[1] Him who ploughed the battle-ground with his spear, the goblins praised. They lifted with their long bangled quivering hands, the dark crowned heads of the dead and displaying them in front they sang and praised the First God in the celebrated *muṉṟērkkuravai* (comparing this battle) with that at the time of the churning of the milk- ocean, and with the battle waged in sea-swept Lankā,
and also with the war when He, sea-hued,

drove the chariot (of Arjuna); the *pinrērkkuravai*[2] consisted of a goblin-dance in that burial ground (the battlefield).

1 The term atari-tirittal means literally 'threshing grain with cattle'. The threshing floor is compared here to the battle-ground, and the grain to the enemy ranks, and the cattle to elep- hants. (See Puram., st. 371).

2 Pinrērkkuravai is a kind of war dance, generally danced behind the war-chariot of honour to celebrate victory in war. Similarly there was munrērkkuravai, a kind of dance danced in front of the war-chariot of honour. In this particular case the dance of the goblins represented the pinrērkuravai.

With crowned heads as the oven on which broken heads were placed as cooking vessels and shoulder-blades used as ladles, the

goblin-cook fed each goblin with a belly-full of animal food. Delighted with that ghastly meal, the goblin groups said this as grace: 'Let the king wielding the righteous sceptre, who fought and won this
dharmaic battle,[1] live long.'

Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ of the mighty spear who had brought the war to a successful end said to his foot-messengers: 'Go and courteously assure our support to all those who uphold the Vēdas in the northern region, and who lead holy lives by keeping alight sacrificial fires.' Afterwards the protecting king, who had won the battle and accomplished his object with Villavaṉ Kōtai, commanded several differently armed units of his army to secure from the golden-crested Himalayas a stone slab from which he proceeded to carve the image of the peerless Goddess of Chastity.

1 This shows that the slaughter of non-combatants was not countenanced. When once the sword was cast off and soldiers had put on ascetic robes they were not interfered with. It may also be taken to mean that while it was a righteous war from the point of view of the goblins it was really an unrighteous war.

CANTO XXVII

NIRPPATAIK KATAI

OR

BATHING THE STONE

AFTER the stone slab brought from the renowned
Himalayas in the north had been carved into the figure
of the goddess Pattiṉi, the rain-bestower, it was placed
on the resplendent crowns of Kaṉaka and Vijaya, who had
offered battle to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ of the angry spear, the king
of the shining anklet, who

as if he had assumed the
function of the Lord of Death in
eighteen *nāḻikais*[1]
swallowed up numbers of
lives of the Arya kings who
had not hitherto respected the prowess
of the southern
Tamils so that this sea-girt world might
add this to the
list of battles fought respectively for
eighteen years,[2]
eighteen months[3] and eighteen days.[4]

1 Sixty nāḻikais make one day and night. One hour is equal to 2½ nāḻikais.

2 The reference is to a Dēvāsura-yuddha but we have not come across a Dēvāsura war which lasted for eighteen years, though a number of similar wars are mentioned in the Purāṇas.

3 This seems to be a reference to the Rāma-Rāvaṇa-yuddha.

There is no authority for the statement that the Rāmāyaṇa war lasted for eighteen months. Even if we take into consideration the Khara-yuddha which is said to have been fought in Hēmanta

(roughly January), Rāvaṇa was slain at the beginning of the following April. This calculation gives a duration of only fifteen months. But Kamban in describing the shedding of the blood of Śūrpaṇakā, the sister of Rāvaṇa, remarks that it was practically the beginning of the war between Rāma and Rāvaṇa. If this tradition is to be believed the total duration of the war may be taken as eighteen months.

4 The reference is to the great battle fought at Kurukṣetra, the contending parties being the Kauravas and Pāṇṭavas. This duration corresponds to that cited in the epic Mahābhārata.

Ceṅkuṭṭuvan who put to death in the field advancing hosts of the enemy in a single day with

of battle
his army
of frightful lances, came back to the banks of the mighty Ganges, and had the stone intended for the goddess

Pattini bathed in conformity with Śastraic rules, with the help of masters versed in ritual.[1] There, on the southern bank of the crystal-clear Ganges, the king entered the camp in a wide plain finely fitted by the Arya kings with a spacious palace,[2] artistic porches, golden islets, *pantals* beautified by flowers, private chambers, large flower-groves, lotus pools, dancing-halls and much else, to meet the needs of that highly renowned monarch.

He summoned to his presence the sons of those warriors who:

had put an end to
the ambitious enemy kings in those vast regions
and made the daughters of Heaven[3] garland
them in wedlock;

had played havoc in the battlefield,
and though defeated in action were
not disheartened but lay with their
shoulders and heads, above value, chopped off;

had triumphed over their enemies, though but hired soldiers, by the use of spears, ere their own bodies were cut asunder in that wide battlefield;

had dropped down dead with their swords, their

ancestry highly applauded and praised in a *kuravai* dance by goblins with sunken eyes;

1 This is another reference to the fact that the king was a follower of the orthodox school of Hinduism.

2 The reception accorded to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ by his allies in the north in honour of his victory.

3 The reference is to vīra-svarga, set apart for bold warriors who remain in action to the end and give up their lives heroically. It is said that such soldiers enjoy heavenly bliss.

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had fallen dead with
their fellow-soldiers, causing the demise of their wives[1] who wore sparkling jewels on
their necks;

had, as the vanguard of the army, adorned their crowns with *vākai* wreaths in honour of having killed the front ranks of the enemy with their spears;

had fallen down with an ornamental

staff fixed in each of their strong chariots and stood with blood on their bodies.

He also summoned soldiers who had taken possession of the field of battle after having cut off, so as to move even Yama to compassion, the dark crowned heads renowned for incalculable prowess, together with warriors whose breastplates had been pierced through to their backs causing wounds on their chests. The monarch who, by his great triumph, had won renown worthy of celebration (by poets) called to each of them 'Come near me' and rewarded one and all with a golden *vākai* flower which was more than he would present even on his birthday.[3] He also decorated himself with a garland of palmyra and *tumpai*[3] flowers, befitting that great victory.

1 It was the custom for wives to take their

lives after their
husbands had died heroically on the field.
It does not necessarily mean that these ladies went to the field with their husbands: Tolkāppiyaṉār
prohibited this. (See 'Porul', sūtra 175).

2 Rewards for the sons of heroic rulers who fell on the field. The comparison of these gifts with those on the king's birthday shows that the custom was to give gifts on a lavish scale on that particular occasion. The day is known as perumaṅkalam. (See Tolk., 'Porul', sūtra 90. Cf. Veḷḷaṉināḷ, Perumpāṇā., l. 295. See above Cila., canto xxiii, l. 56).

3 Tumpai is a symbolical
represents complete victory.

representation of victory. Vakai

While he was thus sitting on his throne, the Brahmana

Māṭalaṉ appeared before him and said: 'Long live our king! The seashore song of the lady Mātavi[1] made the crowns of Kaṉaka and Vijaya bear a weight. Ruler of the conquered sea-girt earth, may you live long!' The king replied: 'You have spoken enigmatically, and are not likely to be understood by some among these enemy

kings. What did you say, O Brahmana, learned in the four Vēdas? Please explain.[2]

The Brahmana Māṭalaṉ then continued: 'The maid Mātavi, whilst sporting on the cool beach, had a lover's quarrel (with Kōvalaṉ). Then governed by fate,[3] she sang the seashore song appropriate to her dance. This resulted not in their reunion but in their separation, and necessitated his entry with his virtuous wife into the ancient towered city of Madura, whose reigning king with his wreath of leaves attained blissful heaven as a result of the murder of Kōvalaṉ, whose wife, O lord of the Kuṭavar,[4] entered your country. And now she is being borne upon the crowned heads of the northern kings.

'Be good enough to listen also to the reason for my coming here, O king of kings holding the illustrious spear! After going round the Potiyil hills sacred to the

1 The implication is that but for the

song, Kōvalaṉ would not have left Mātavi's house, and there would have been no tragedy and no consequent glorification of Kaṇṇaki as Dēvi, which necessitated Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's northern expedition in which Kaṉaka and Vijaya were vanquished.

2 The author seems to emphasize throughout the book the working of destiny and the fruits of past karma.

3 This may indicate that the Cēra was the lord of the western region as the Cōḷa was of the eastern (Kuṇakku).

great sage[1] and bathing in the famous ghat

of Kumari (Cape Comorin), I was returning, when, as if impelled by fate, I went into Madura belonging to far-famed Tennavan of the sharp sword. There when Mātari heard that the beautiful (Kaṇṇaki) had defeated the Pāṇṭyan king of the mighty army with her anklet, she proclaimed in the *tāterumanṟam*[a]: "O people of the cowherd community! Kōvalaṉ has done no wrong; it is the king who has erred; I have lost her to whom I gave refuge. Have the king's umbrella and sceptre fallen from the righteous path?" With these words, she threw herself into the burning flames in the dead of night.

'Kavunti, distinguished for her holy penance, waxed
wroth; but when she heard of the death of the great king
renowned for his righteous sceptre, her ire was appeased
and she burst out: "Was this the fate of those who joined
my company?" She took a vow to die of starvation[3] and
thus gave up her life.

'I heard in full detail all this and also of the devastation
that overtook the great city of Madura ruled by the Pāṇṭyaṉ[4]
of the golden car. Overcome by grief I went back
to my native place, the ancient capital of the Cōḻas[5]

and informed the chief men there of this. Kōvalan's

1 The sage under reference is Agastya.

2 Tātērumanram was the common meeting-place of cowherds and cowherdesses, and was generally under a tree.

3 The practice of sallēkana or committing suicide by slow starvation is commended to Jainas and their ascetics in particular. Tradition says that Chandragupta to death.

Maurya starved himself

4 One title of the Pāntyan king was Śeliyan.

5 Kāvērippūmpattinam.

father heard what had happened to his son and daughter- in-law and also to the

righteous monarch of Madura, and became deeply afflicted. He distributed all his wealth in charity, entered the seven Indra-Viharas,[1] and began to practise self-denial like the three hundred monks who roam the sky, having renounced the world to obtain release from the cycle of births. The wife of him who thus renounced, unable to endure the sorrowful news of the death of her son under such tragic circumstances, died of pity. Kaṇṇaki's father also (at his fate) gave away his wealth in religious gifts, and adopted *dharma* in the presence of Ājivakas[2] like sages engaged in penance of a high order. The noble wife of him who made these gifts gave up her good life within a few days.

'The lady Matavi heard all this and said to her good mother: "I am in duty bound to live a virtuous life. Do not allow Maṇimēkalai to take to the

life of a courtesan
which leads to great suffering." Shorn of her hair with the flower-wreaths therein, she entered the Buddha-Vihara
and received holy instruction (*aram*).* These people died
because they heard this news from me; therefore I come to bathe in the holy waters of the Ganges (in order to purify myself). Long live you, O king of kings!'

1 The Buddhist temple.

2 Kannaki's father turned out to be an Ajivaka, while Kannaki's own religion seems to have been Jainism or Buddhism. This is another proof of the non-differentiation of religious sects in the early centuries of Christian era.

3 The great transformation in Matavi's life is remarkable.
As a courtesan her fidelity is all the more appreciable. She became a regular Buddhist bhikṣuṇi by casting off her hair, the outward sign of a sannyasini. She also led her daughter to that way of thinking.

At this the mighty lord of the Cēras, wearing the
unfadable *vañci* garland strung with palmyra leaves and
tumpai, asked: 'May I hear what happened in the highly flourishing Pāṇṭyaṉ kingdom after the king's death?'
Māṭalaṉ the Brahmana spoke again: 'May you live long,
O king of the great world. You destroyed in a day the nine
umbrellas of nine enemy kings[1] who joined together in an
alliance against your brother-in-law Kiḷḷivaḷavaṉ[2] and who
would neither countenance his elevation as crown prince nor
listen to his commands but who caused ruin to his thriving
kingdom; by this you re-established his golden wheel in its rightful place.

'O Poraiyan who adorned thyself with a garland of
palmyra leaves on the success of thy sword, held in thy
right hand, in uprooting the margosa with its long tufted
branches guarded by Palaiyan[3] be gracious and listen.
The victorious Vēr-Celiyan[4] residing at Korkai[5] offered
a human sacrifice of one thousand goldsmiths in a day to
the divine Pattini who had twisted off one of her breasts.

1 See also below, canto xxviii, ll. 116-7. From this it is
seen that the battle was fought at Nēriväyil. See also Patirru,
Fifth Ten, patikam; also T.A.S., Vol. III, pp. 102-4.

2 The reference is to Perunarkilli, son of Cenkuttuvan's
mother's brother and therefore a first cousin

of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ.

3 The lord of Mōkūr, a small but powerful of the hills. This line gives us a glimpse into the ancient practice according to which every chieftain had a guardian tree (kāvalmaram), and the uprooting of that tree by an enemy king amounted to the defeat of the king of the land. See Akam., st. 347, ll. 3-5; and also st. 127. The reference is to the kaṭampu being felled by Imayavarampaṉ.

4 Vēṟ-Ceḻiyaṉ was the ruler of Koṟkai.

5 The Pāṇṭyaṉ kingdom had two capitals, Madura and Koṟkai, corresponding to the Cōḻa and the Cēra.

And when ancient Madura lost her glory and

was chafing in untold trouble owing to royal injustice, this Pāṇṭyan prince of the lunar line,[1] which was celebrated for the exemplary way in which it gave protection to the people of the southern regions, mounted in succession the royal throne of Madura, like the sun mounting in the morning, with his rays crimson, the divine chariot with the single wheel[2] yoked to seven horses with tiny bells attached to their necks. May the king of our land live for all time protecting the world from aeon to aeon; live he in fame.'

During the time when the king sat listening to these words of the Brahmana, the wide world was enveloped in complete darkness. With the disappearance of the sun, the thick spreading twilight reddened the western sky where the shining crescent appeared. While the great monarch was gazing at the beauty of the crescent,[3] the court astrologer rose up and spoke words appropriate to

1 That the Pāṇṭyas belonged to the lunar race is evident from more than one reference in the text. If there is any significance in this ancient tradition, prevalent as long ago as the early centuries of the Christian era, it shows that the Pāṇṭyas were not altogether of South Indian stock, purely Tamil in character, but a branch of the lunar line established in the Tamil districts long before epic times.

2 This is in accordance with Sanskrit legends where the sun is said to ride on a chariot whose single wheel is yoked to seven horses. For details see Vishṇupurāṇa, Bk. II, ch. viii, st. 2-5.

3 The custom of everyone, from king to peasant, worshipping the moon on the second evening after new moon day was supposed to bring health and wealth. See 'The Lunar Cult in India' in The Indian Antiquary, September 1933.

the occasion: 'In is now thirty-two months[1]

since we left Vañci. Long live the ruler of the earth.' Afterwards the king went along the car street of his camp, lined with strong wooden stakes and enclosed by high, curved curtains of cloth, and casting his eyes upon the hill-like tents, small and big, here and there, went beyond his private chamber down a side-lane and mounted the golden throne picturesquely decorated and beautified by the handi- work of expert artists of the palace. He sent word to Māṭalan̲ through the gate-keeper and asked him: 'Now that the princes of the great and fertile Cōḷa kingdom have died, does the reigning sovereign exercise him sway with- out fault and with success?'

Māṭalan̲, the peaceful Brahmana, blessed him: 'O my king, may you live long!' Then he said: 'Will there ever be a time when the sharp spear of the Cōḷa, which, to the astonishment of the Dēvas who shine with lustrous ornaments destroyed the three fortresses (suspended from the sky),[2] swerves from its

upright path? This cannot
happen to the righteous sceptre of
the monarch who
carved and offered the flesh of his own
body to a pecking
kite,[3] in order to relieve its hunger and

to remove the

1 This indicates that it was two years and eight months since Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ had left his capital. A considerable portion of this time must have been taken in the march of his vast army when there were no means of quick transport.

2 See below, canto xxix, 'Ammāṉaivari', l. 4. For similar references see Puṟam., st. 39; Maṇi., canto i, l. 4. Later works like the Rājarājacōḷan Ula (Kaṇṇi, 13) and the Vikramacōḷan Ula (Kaṇṇi) refer to this incident.

3 In the Mahābhārata the story goes thus: in order to test king Sibi's impartial justice Indra and Agni assumed the forms of a hawk and a pigeon respectively. The pigeon which was pursued by the hawk sought shelter from the king. The hawk...

severe affliction of the dove hopping on its tiny feet. There can never be trouble even in times of adversity to the lord whose country is protected by the river Kāvēri.' At these words from Māṭalaṉ, the foremost of of the learned Brahmanas, the great king and wielder of the lance, wearing the palmyra garland, became mightily pleased, and saying, ' O

Brahmana Māṭalan please accept', he honoured him with a gift of fifty *tulāms* of pure gold equal to his own weight.[1]

Afterwards he gave leave to the Arya kings, the Nūr-ruvar Kannar, to go back to their own prosperous king-doms. Next he commanded his thousand messengers —noted for their fierce replies to haughty questions asked of them by enemy kings—to exhibit to the two great Tamil kings, the royal princes of big armies who fled for their lives disguised as ascetics, and the Arya herma-

demanded of the king the pigeon, its legitimate prey. The king who had promised protection to the pigeon offered to give any substitute for it. The hawk claimed the flesh of the king himself. He gladly cut off a piece of flesh and had it weighed. To his amazement the pigeon outweighed all pieces of flesh. Then Sibi himself got into the scale, whereupon Indra and Agni resumed their genuine forms and glorified his sacrificing spirit (Vana Parva, ch. 197). For a more or less similar version see the Jātakas, Vol. IV, pp. 250 ff.

This forms the subject of one of the frescoes at Ajanta, though the fresco is considerably damaged. See G. Yazdani's Ajanta, Part I, pp. 4-7.
See also N. J. Krom, Barābudūr (1927), Vol. I, pp. 275-7.

1 A measurement equal to one's weight.

This means that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's weight was equal to that of 50 tulāms of gold, and he must therefore have been of large stature. This is also one of the sixteen supreme gifts enjoined on all and on the king particularly. It is clear from the Vijayanagara inscriptions that its kings performed these sixteen gifts. See Dikshitar, Matsya Purāṇa, A Study, pp. 95-100.

phrodite[1] distinguished for her dimpled cheeks, dark tuft carplike long eyes tinged red at the corners, lustrous ear-rings, red mouth with white teeth and *sūṭakam* and other bangles on her shoulders resembling bamboos, swelling young breasts, slender waist which looked like lightning, and anklets on her little feet, and also (to present) the captive kings Kaṉaka and Vijaya who fought because of their ignorance of the great Tamil valour. symbolized by the blemishless palmyra (garland).

In the morning, after undisturbed sleep the bee (dwelling) in the blossoming lotuses of those vast regions watered by the Ganges, was everywhere murmuring *yāḻ*-like music. The young rising sun appeared on the lofty top of the eastern hills, spreading its wide rays. The conquer- ing ruler of the western regions (Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ), decorated his wreath of *vākai* flowers with *tumpai* of the north, went round the famous camp city, and started in a southern direction with his victorious army.

In the many-storied mansion piercing the

sky (in the city of Vañci) where the Goddess of Prosperity ever dwells, was the golden harem overspread with an artistic flowery canopy, the work of skilled hands, ornamented with hanging festoons of pearls and flowers strung in rows, and glittering with the dazzle of diamonds and of lustrous gems ingeniously set at random in gold thread. Here shone the queen's beautiful gold bedstead, borne by its exquisite golden legs and covered with the soft down shed during the embraces of swans, worthy of the company of her

1 For a more or less similar description of the pēṭi (herma- phrodite) see Maṇi, canto iii, ll. 116-25. This custom of sending a pēṭi al·ng with captured kings is peculiar and seems to imply that there was no difference between the pēṭi and monarch.

the vanquished 366

lord[1] in retirement. There the queen rested, yet could not sleep (because of her separation).

At that time the maidservants who had heard of the triumph of the chariot and sword of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ in the battlefield, and who were skilled in all modes of giving welcome news, (approached her) wishing her long life and praising her in many a song, said: '(O Lady), abandon now sorrow at the separation of your bosom-lord.' Next the small-bodied, the hunch-backed and the dwarfed waited upon her and said: 'Let Beauty reappear! The great lord is come. Dress your fragrant flowery hair with day-time ornaments.'[2]

Then was also heard the hill song (*kuṟiñcippāṇi*),[3] 'Let the path of him who returns on the fleeting elephant, decked with *vākai* and the *tumpai* of the north, be shortened' sung by the Kuṟava maids in different ways. Waiting in their raised lofts they beheld the forester,[4] stupefied by drinking honey from honey-combs on bamboos, failing in his duty of hurling stones from slings at big elephants which trespassed and slept on the extensive millet fields.

The noisy song (*ōtaippāṇi*)[5] heard: 'Having pulled down the

of the ploughmen was
great fortresses of the

1 It may mean that two mattresses were spread one over the other on the bedstead.

2 Wives wore no jewellery during the absence of their hus- bands.
Cf. also Cila., canto iv, ll. 47-57.

3 Songs characteristic of the four regions into which the whole land was divided were sung, beginning with the hill song.

4 From this we understand that forest-products tected by the State watchmen. They lived in lofts and

were pro-
their chief
article of diet seems to have been honey.

5 Ōtaippāṇi is a song characteristic

of the marutam region.

northern kings, the lord of the Kuṭavar,

who ploughed
the enemy's country with asses and sowed white millet,[1]
is come; O bullocks! you need not bear tomorrow the
heavy plough; for it is the king's birthday[2] when the
fetters of the imprisoned will be removed.'

Beside the celebrated bathing that, attractive like
Indra's bow in the sky, and spread with the paints, scented
powders and flowers of the bathers in the cool Āṉ-Porunai,
the music of the flute (*kuḻalpāṇi*)[3] was heard: 'The bow-
man is coming with herds of cattle from the far famed
Himalayas. O cattle, you will mix with them'. This
was sung by cowherds who had tied their tufts with flower-

wreaths of charming *kuvaḷai* nurtured by the sucking
bee, and of the sweet-smelling lotus with fully open petals,
when they stood on the stem of. the blossomed screw-pine,
after driving the king's cattle to their watering Place.

And there was the well-phrased love-song (*antīmpāṉi*) :[4]
'Our king Vāṉavaṉ has returned to fondle the shoulders
and the swelling breasts of his youthful queen. Maidens!
Let us sing the *vañci* song[5] in praise of his *tumpai* adorned
with palmyra.' This was sung in the language of lovers
by fisher-girls who assembled on the seashore in groups
beneath the *puṉṉai* tree on the sands washed by the frothy

waves playing *ammāṉai* and who gathered in their open, bangled hands, lustrous pearls taken out of conches with clefts in their right sides.

1 Kavaṭi may also be interpreted as cowrie.

2 The term veḷḷaṇi in the text stands for the king's birthday. It was a custom for the king to dress himself in white on that particular day as a symbol of purity and grace.

3 The song of the mullai region.

4 The song of the neytal or the maritime region.

5 The vañci song was sung in honour of victory.

Listening attentively to these songs, the mighty (sleep-less) queen (Kōpperuntēvi)[1] replaced

her close-fitting bangles. The conches blew. Seated on the topmost point of the swift State elephant, under the garlanded white umbrella, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ with a *vākai* wreath on his crown entered Vañci, welcomed by its citizens in a procession of carts drawn by elephants.[1]

1 The name of the queen was Iḷaṅkō-vēṉmāḷ. The poet impresses upon us that she was an ideal wife and observed vows as a chaste wife should during the absence of her lord. She passed practically sleepless nights and having discarded her ornaments during the king's absence, put them on again when she heard that her lord was entering the capital.

2 Elephants were yoked to vehicles and to ride on them was perhaps the privilege of royalty. A reference to the existence of such conveyances is also made in the Patirru., Fifth Ten, patikam.

CANTO XXVIII

NATUKAR KATAI

OR

THE CONSECRATION

EVENING, when flowers blossom and many say their prayers, took possession of the ancient city of Vañci renowned for the wealth[1] of its great king's victory over the world, and for his conquering sword and tall golden umbrella[2] which like the moon cools the

earth. At that

hour maidens with shining bangles offered pretty flowers
before a lighted lamp[3] burning with a white flame, and
prayed: 'Long live the king of the whole world.'

Ladies with collyrium-painted eyes and with firm, round, and youthful breasts warmly[4] embraced the sword
warriors who had brought the king's mission to a successful end,[5] and who wore wreaths of palmyra leaves and gold chains worked with flowers. The chests of some had been pierced by the white tusks of elephants; the chests of others had been scarred with deep wounds caused by long lances; the deep and shining chests of still others had been pierced by shooting arrows; while the jewel-decorated chests of the rest were cleft by

sharp swords.

1 For similar expressions see Maturaikkāñci. l. 763.

Padirru., st. 82, l. 16 and

2 The stick and the top of the umbrella were made of gold. 3 See above, canto ix, ll. 1-3, for the *mores* of household women in their evening prayers.

4 Cf. Kalinka., Kāṭal., l. 35.

5 See below ll. 133-4

On that evening, their (ladies') oblique and passionate
glances like the flower-arrows of the god with the fish
flag, from under the curved dark eyelashes on their moon-
like faces, amidst thick clouds of sleek hair fragrant with
fumes of incense, conveyed the message (of their hearts)

to these young warriors whose chests were adorned with jewels. They extolled the evening, saying: 'This is indeed a medicament;' and the women, whose bodies were like tender mango leaves, accorded to them a feast from the smile of joy on their red soft lips, opening from their coral mouths in faces with carp-like dark eyes stretching to their beautiful ears.

Evening[1] also provided capital amusement to these warriors in the shape of maidens with faultless faces, shining with beauty-spots (*tilaka*) of *kastūri*. Their curly hair and flower-wreaths, where bees still clustered, slipped in their enjoyment and they tidied themselves

in front of mirrors.[2] They then gently withdrew a small well-looking lute from its ornamental case and played on the string twisted over its venerable stem, a *pālai-paṇ* which was the natural result of taking the *kural* (basic note) itself as the tonic (*kural*). Then they played the beautiful *kuṟiñci-paṇ* in the traditional mode which was the result of taking *tuttam* (the second note of the scale) as *kural.*

Evening then departed after pointing out to the people of ancient Vañci celebrated by many, the spreading rays of the rising moon which received the homage of the

1 The poet narrates how Evening acted as host to the guests.

viz. the warriors who had come back from their expedition after a well-earned success. The feast consisted of the embraces of the long-separated lovers, and of singing and dancing.

2 See Pari., §21, l. 23; Akam., st. 71, The use of looking-glasses was very common.

world, and which resembled the face of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ, whose anklets were kissed by the crowns of vanquished monarchs, when he gave audience to his aggrieved subjects.

Then the lovers and their ladies obeyed the behests of

the god of love—the archer using arrows tipped with fine

flowers—who held his sway over the moonlit terraces,

groves covered with fallen flowers, dancing-halls powdered

with (soft) earth, pandals with blooming flowers, white-

legged bedsteads and canopied verandas[1] over
all of which
spread the cool rays of the moon.

In the centre of the ancient city with its
rampart walls
where flags flew, stood prominently the
elegantly decorated
sabhā hall of the golden palace,[2] like Māru
standing in the
midst of this vast fruitful sea-girt earth.

To see the beauty of the moon, the
chaste and good
queen Vēṇmāḷ came, followed on one side by
lamp–bear-
ing maidens[3] with glittering bangles who
uttered benedic-
tions of longevity: and on another side by those
who played
on *mirudaṅkams* smeared with mud and on
lutes with
curved pegs, and by those who
sang sweet melodies (*paṇ*);

on one side were dwarfs and hunchbacks who carried the

paste of the musk deer and the paste of white sandalwood;

and on another side eunuchs in women's clothes carried

incense and other fragranees, maidens carried mattresses

scattered with flowers, incense and other scents, and

maidservants in the approved manner carried mirrors,

1

The general meeting-places of the lovers are given. One feature of such places was the prevalence of cool moonlight.

2 From this we gather that the palace was in the heart of the fortress city of Vañci.

3 The queen's attendants and followers.

The paraphernalia

consisted of musical instruments, scents, flowers and

clothes,

clothes and ornamented vessels. Along with his queen the ruler of the sea-girt earth mounted the beautifully decorated terrace.

Then, a Cākkayan,[1] a dancing expert from Paraiyūr,[2] which was famous for Brahmanas versed in the four Vēdas, exhibited for the king's pleasure, the dance known as *koṭṭiccētam*[3] danced with Umā as part of Himself by the mighty Śiva, while the anklet worn on his beautiful feet tinkled: the big *paṟai* borne in his loving and graceful hand sounded: his red eyes expressed a thousand charming suggestions: and his red matted hair

tossed in all directions: her *pāṭakam* did not throb: and yet her *sūṭakam* was not displaced: her waist-band did not produce any sound: her breasts did not shake; her head jewels

1 The Brahmana as actor and dancer.

2 Even today we have in Malabar a professional class of dancers and musicians who go by the the name of Śākkiyar. Mr T. K. Gopala Panikkar in his Malabar and its Folk (pp. 184-5), gives interesting details of the dress and the methods of these modern Śākkiyars assisted by the Nambiyārs who play the musical instruments. According to the Divākaram they were the Vaḷḷuvars or private secretaries to the kings, and the Kūttaśśākkiyars were a section of the Śākkiyars and were perhaps peculiar to the ancient malaināṭu (see Śen Tamiḷ, Vol. VII, No. 1). But an epigraph of Rājēndra Cōḷa

1 (V. Rangachari's Inscriptions of the Madras Presidency, Vol. III, Trichinopoly, No. 824) records in his twenty-ninth year (A.D. 1041), 'a gift of land by the great assembly of Kamaravalli Caturvēṭi-magalam to Sākkai Māṛayam Vikramacōḷan

for performing the dance (śākkai-kūttu) thrice on each of the festivals Mārkaḻi-tiruvāṭirai and Vaikaśi-tiruvāṭirai.' This shows that Cākkai-kūttu was a living institution in the me- dieval period of the heyday of the Cōḷa empire.

3 A kind of dance sacred to Śiva also known as koṭukoṭṭi or merely koṭṭi. Here Śiva is said to have danced with Umā on one side, that is, in Ardhanārīśvara form.

were not disturbed: and her sleek curls did not get loosened.

When he had finished praising the ruler of the vast world, the latter went to the hall of audience[1] and bade enter the Brahmana Māṭalaṉ, Nīlaṉ, and other *kañcukins*, when

the gate-keeper informed him of their arrival. Making obeisance to the king through the palace-officials,[2] Nilan̲ reported: 'O king with the *tumpai* and the anklet, tokens of success in battle! Attended by these vanquished Arya kings we went to the ancient city of Cempiyan̲ (Cōḷa) and paid our respects to him through his officers.[3] Seated in the ornamented *maṉṭapam* constructed (with the materials received as gifts) from the Vaccira (Vajra,) Avanti and Magada kings,[4] he remarked to the commander

1 The term used in the text for the hall of audience is vetti-yan̲ maṉṭapam—literally the hall where the king sat to give audience to visitors and others. It is also known as

ōlakkamaṇṭ-
apam, and perōlakkamaṇṭapam. See Studies in Tamil Literature and History, p. 18. n.

2 Here we are introduced to another detail of Tamil polity. Officials or non-officials who wished to have interviews with the king spoke to the gatekeeper who in his turn informed the king and with the latter's permission they were admitted to the royal presence. There were certain officials, perhaps of the nature of modern private secretaries, in the palace whose duty it was to introduce visitors to His Majesty.

3 The term tamar has been rendered as 'officers'. It appears that visitors to a king in Tamil India were taken to his presence by special officials who, we have to infer, were appointed for the purpose of welcoming them and introducing them to His Majesty. The commentator explains śankōcaparivāram as probably meaning private officials who had nothing to do with administration.

4 This presupposes a Cōla expedition to north India, some-

time before the one undertaken by Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ.

of his chariot corps[1]
occupying the front rank of the army:

"It is no achievement to capture in the wide expanse of

the battlefield those who, after displaying great military

prowess, gave up their umbrellas and swords and fled in

the disguise of non-combatants."[2]

'When we took leave of the magnanimous Cōḷa mon-

arch with his breast adorned with a glowing garland, O

lord of the righteous sceptre, we went to see the king of

Madura of resounding fame. The Pāṇṭyan[3] of the mighty

spear said: "This is a strange kind of victory indeed,

gained by the display of exceeding passion and anger

against monarchs who had abandoned the battlefield to

the enemy and adopted the garb of ascetics. It is all the

more strange when Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ had decided to use the

shaft of the far-famed white umbrella placed by the Aryan

kings on the huge nape of their elephants as a *talaikkōl*[4] (a

dancer's rod) signifying Jayanta, and to worship Śiva with

His consort Umā at his side at Kuyilāluvam[5] on a part of

the Himalayan slopes."

1 From the term talaittār, it can be inferred that the poet has in his mind the traditional reckoning of the army as ratha, gaja, turaga, and pada. Here ratha occupies the place of honour.

2 According to the Cōḷa king, the Cēra king's action smacked of unrighteous warfare.

3 The Pāṇṭyaṉ's view of the capture of prisoners by Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ. To him also the action of the Cēra did not commend itself.

4 The talaikkol was invariably the shaft of the enemy's umbrella seized in war.

5 A place of worship in the Himalayas sacred to Śiva. The learned editor invites our attention to one

Kuylālapuram, mentioned in a commentary on the Jain work Nīlakēśi, as one of the places of the Buddha's advent. It has been suggested that the scene of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's battle lay in the north at Kośala. See

When Nīlaṉ reported the disparaging remarks of these two monarchs Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ laughed with scorn while his lotus-like red eyes sparkled like fire. (Noticing this change), Māṭalaṉ, of undiminished learning, rose up and said :

'O king of kings, may your valour live for ever ! May you also live long ! After destroying Viyalūr[1] famous for

neytal in small bunches, where elephant sleep in the
mountains dense with pepper plants, you won a decisive
victory at Nērivāyil[2] over nine kings wearing *atti* garlands;
camping on the outskirts of Iṭumpil[3] with your army of
lofty chariots, you fought a fierce battle on the sea pursu-
ing the enemy for a long distance;[4] you discomfited the
Arya monarchs who advanced on the banks of the great
Ganges with its heavy torrents.

'O king, wearing a long garland of victory and
possessing a huge army! O lion of kings, who knows all
that can be known from great men, dismiss your wrath!
Ruler of the earth, may the days you have yet

to live be-

come more numerous than the particles of sand in the cool

river Ān-porunai![5]

T. G. Aravamutham, The Kāveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam

Age, p. 40.

1 Viyalūr is noted for pepper and elephants. It is also

called Viyalūr and may be located somewhere in Kaṭaṉmalaināṭu

and was once under Naṉṉaṉ Vēṇmāḷ (Akam., st. 97).

2 The battle of Nērivāyil: see Cila., canto xxvii, l. 117 ff.

It was a place to the south of Uṟaiyūr.

3 See Patiṟṟu., Fifth Ten, patikam. This is Iṭumbāṭavanam,

a village near Tirutturaippūṇṭi, Tanjore Dt. It is

interesting that

the Tevāram should refer to this place.

4 Here is evidence of a naval expedition. we have no details.

Unfortunately 5 This is modern Amaravati.

See Puram., st. 11, 36 etc.

'Ruler of the earth encircled by the deep sea, may

you live long! Pray do not dismiss my words. Listen.

Even after passing through fifty years of your protection[1]

on this earth you do not perform religious sacrifice[2] but

continue to perform the sacrifice of battle. O king, who

carried out your vow with a sword in your right hand

and with a garland of palmyra! Among your ancestors

in this city one king distinguished himself by destroying

the *kaṭampu* of the seas;[3] another exhibited great prowess

by carving the bow-emblem on the Himalayas;[4] another

enabled a Vēdic Brahmana in return for composing some

poems, to ascend (bodily) to the higher world;[5] another

commanded messengers of Death not to take away lives

indiscriminately but only in a particular order; another Cēra penetrated the golden region of the high mountain in the

fertile kingdom of the barbarous Yavaṇas.[6]

1 This shows that either Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was aged fifty at the time of his return to Vañci from his northern expedition; or it was fifty years since he had assumed the reins of government. The text admits of both interpretations and possibly the latter is more likely.

2 This instance of religious sacrifice and Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's ready approval bears out unmistakably that the king was a true follower of the established religion of the land represented by the Vēda.

3 Patiṟṟu., st. 2, ll. 12, etc.

4 Further evidence of an earlier expedition to north India.

5 The reference is to Pālai Kautamaṉār. See Patiṟṟu., Third Ten, patikam. Also Cila., canto xxii, p. 63 ff., note. Palyāṉaiccel-keḻukuṭṭuvaṉ is under reference.

6 The Yavaṇa country must have been somewhere in the Indus region. It is worthy of note that the learned author characterizes them as men of barbarous words. According to the Sanskritists they spoke the mlēccha tongue. Their kingdom is

'Yet another Cēra had the might to assail the hill fortress (*akappa*) of an enemy after driving him away with his great army from the dire battlefield; another in that illustrious line of kings bathed in the Ayirai[1] river and in the waters brought from the two seas;[2] another brought the *Caṭukkappūtam*[3] unto Vañci and offered it the sacrifice of liquor; none of these escaped the clutches of death. You know well that this body is not stable. Did you not see in your battle with the

Arya kings, who insulted the audacious Tamils of conquering prowess, that wealth[4] will not abide for all time with the men living in this fertile world?

'O just king, it is not necessary to point out to men of wisdom that youth will not last for ever.[5] O protecting king, the goddess of wealth abides in your breast, for you see your own body covered with grey hairs. Even good souls in divine bodies may, it is just possible, enter human frames on earth. O

honoured king, the souls of mentioned among

the northern countries in the Brahmāṇṭa Purāṇa, ch. 16.

1 Patiṟṟu., st. 3,

10, 79, 88-90. Poṉṉāṉi is the modern name, See Pandit R. Raghava Aiyangar's Vañcimānakar, p. 52 ff. The river takes its source from Ayiraimalai or Aivaramalai in the Ānamalais, Coimbatore District.

2 The two seas under

reference are the eastern and western seas. In other words his sway extended from coast to coast.

3 Catukkam is from the Sanskrit term *Catuṣkam*. It was a feature of ancient cities. See, for example, the description of Lanka in the Rāmāyaṇa, 'Sundara', ch. 53, st. 26.

4. The author's view of wealth is explained in Sanskrit by two pregnant words *cala* and *cañcala*.

5 By past karma

a god may be born as a man, a man as an animal, and an animal as a hellish being or vice versa.

those who are born as men now may perchance be reborn as animals. Souls which cast off the bodies of animals may, it is possible, find a place in the afflicted bodies of hellish beings.[1] Men are but actors on a stage, and will have no enduring embodiment in

only one fixed form.[2] That life after death will depend upon deeds[3] done in a previous birth is a significant statement which is not untrue. O king decorated with a garland of seven crowns[4] on your breast, may the discus which you hold accumulate more and more repute for your line!

'O king of the powerful sword! I have chosen (to voiee all this) not to solicit rare gifts from you. I cannot suffer to see a good soul wrapped within a good body travel the path trodden by the common people of this vast world. O king who has crossed the limits of learning![5] You should therefore do that great and fruitful *yajña* (sacrifice which Vēdic scriptures ordain for a Kṣatriya king) with the help of sacrificial priests learned in the four Vēdas, in order that you may gain that (superior) path which gods extol.[6]

1 Here is the philosophic view of life.
The author is against postponing things to the morrow.

2

See Maṇi., canto xii, ll. 51-2

3 Ibid., canto vi, ll. 158-9. Belief in karma and rebirth.

4 Cf. Patiṟṟu., st. 14, 16, 45 comm.

5 Evidence which shows that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was highly lea-
rncd as befitted a Kṣatriya monarch.
By the fact that he con- sented to do the yajña, it is clear that he was a member of the Kṣatriya community. If it had not been so, the Brahmana Māṭalaṉ would not have insisted on this, which was the Kṣatriya king's birthright.

6 The implication is that the king must
sūya.

perform the Rāja-

'If you say that a good deed can be done

tomorrow,[1] it may chance that your good soul trained in Vēdic lore will leave your body even today. In the whole of this sea- girt world there is not one who knows how long he is to live. May you with this your wedded queen[2] live ever worshipped by monarchs wearing anklets of submission who fall at your feet! May our eminent king live long protecting the world from aeon to aeon!'

When the learned tongue of the Vēdic Brahmana thus
ploughed and sowed seeds[3] of divine wisdom in the king's
ears, those seeds sprouted forth in right time. With
a desire to enjoy the fruits of the harvest of virtue, the
king with the resounding anklets, commanded the presence
of those sacrificial priests who had completed their studies
by listening to teachers belonging to a group

of traditional
interpreters of the four Vēdas. They were asked to
commence the festival of sacrificial rituals in the manner
instructed by Māṭalaṉ.

Then he ordered the release of the Arya kings from
prison and had them taken outside the ancient city of
Vañci of exceeding renown, to the mansion of Vēḷāvikkō,
surrounded by pools of water and cool flower-groves.
They were told that they might return to their own cities
on the day following the end of the religious sacrifice.
He had then the pleasure of saying: 'Villavaṉkōtai!
Look to their comforts as befits their royalty.' Orders

1 Cf. Araneri, st. 67.

2 That the queen's presence was indispensable for the re- ligious sacrifice is emphasized, the dharmapatni of Sanskrit litera-
ture.

3 The reference here is to the prescriptions of the Śrauta-
sutra.

were issued to Alumbilvel and also to *āyakkaṇakkar*:[1] 'Let all prisons[2] be vacated and cleaned, let all taxes due from the citizens of our kingdom be remitted.'

Evidencing the example of the Cōḷa king wearing the *atti* garland, Pattiṇi worshipped and prayed to by all the earth, exhibited the truth of the good old Tamil saying that the chastity

of virtuous women would not be meritori- ous if the valiant monarch did not rule properly[3] and made him (the Cōḷa) realize it; again she made the Pāṇṭyan,[4] the guardian of the southern regions, realize that the king would not live if his sceptre swerved from justice. Further the Cēra[5] king of the western regions was made to feel that the wrath incurred by (true) monarchs would not be appeased till their sworn vows were fulfilled so as to be known to the kings of the northern regions. Pattiṉi who in raging fury had raised flames from one of her breasts and devastated the ancient city of Madura, entered our country and stood in the fresh golden

1 Officials of the State, probably connected with the Depart- ment of Accounts, especially the Revenue Department.

2 See above, canto xxiii, ll. 126-7. Cf. Maṇi., canto xix, l.

161. Jivaka., canto l. 2372.

3 Cf. Maṇi., canto xxii, ll. 208-9.

Kuraḷveṇpa 543, comm,

by Parimēlaḷakar. The implication is that because the Cōḷa king did not reign properly, Kōvalaṉ left his wedded wife for a courtesan, and after wasting all his wealth, he had to abandon his native place for an alien country to seek

a livelihood.

4 The implication here is that the

Pāṇṭyaṉ king did not make the necessary preliminary inquiry before administering justice as evidenced by his execution of Kōvalaṉ thmony of his goldsmith.

on the mere tes-

5 The implication in

the case of the Cēra is that no Kṣatriya

:e an insult from another Kṣatriya

lying down. He

larely face the situation.

shade of the cool *vēṅkai* branches. To that venerable lady was dedicated, by the united aid of the *dharmaic* Brahmanas, *purōhitas*, astrologers, and expert sculptors,[1] a shrine (*Pattiṉikkōṭṭam*), constructed in all its parts accord- ing to the prescribed rules[2] so that it might win the approval of the wise. Therein was planted the image of Pattiṉi, carved[3] with expert handiwork upon the stone brought from the Himalayan slopes, the residences of gods, after prayers to the god (Śiva) on the top of those hills. (The deity) was decorated with choice ornaments of exquisite workmanship, and worshipped with flower offerings. At the temple entrance were stationed (images of) the guardian deities.[4] The lion of kings who brought all north India under his control thus performed the ceremony of consecration (*kaṭavuṉ-maṅkalam*) and commanded the

conduct of worship from day to day by sacrificial offerings and other festivities.

1 The silpins or the sculptors were there to build the temple according to the Śilpaśāstra.

2 These rules are largely found in the treatises known as the Āgamas. It may be that the Āgama school had come to stay even before the commencement of the Christian era. See P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar, History of the Tamils, pp. 87-8.

3 This is evidence that Sanskrit works on the Śilpaśāstra had come into popular usage in the Tamil land.

4 These are called dik-pālas and dvāra-pālas in Sanskrit literature.

CANTO XXIX
VALTTUK KATAI
OR
THE BLESSING.

PREFATORY[1]

HAVING defeated the Koṅkus in a fierce battle and journeyed to the banks of the great Ganges, Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ—son of Cēralātaṉ who alone ruled all the earth from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas,[2] and of the daughter of the Cōḻa of the illustrious solar race—remained at Vañci in a wrathful mood. At that time several saints of the north

came there, and reported to him that the northern kings who had gathered together on the occasion of the marriage[2] of a certain princess unanimously derided the prowess of the kings of the southern Tamil regions, who had once opened war on them and carved on the Himalayan slopes their distinctive emblems of bow, fish and tiger. In dis-

paragement they said: 'Perhaps

crowned kings here as powerful

there were then no

as ourselves.' Like a

wheel that has been set revolving by a stick, the decision

to take a stone from the Himalayan slopes for the image

(of Kaṇṇaki), received confirmation as it

enabled Ceṅkuṭ-

1 Here is a summary in prose of the gist of the whole story. With the closing of the last canto ending with maṅkalam, the drama comes to an end. Cantos xxix and xxx read like the Uttara-

kāṇṭam of Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa.

2 See Patiṟṟu., st. 43.

3 Svayamvaram or selection of a husband by the bride was a common form of marriage among the ancient Kṣatriyas.

ṭuvaṉ to vanquish the kings of Aryavarta. When he had accomplished this he stayed for some time on the banks of the Ganges as an honoured guest, but he made some of them bear the Himalayan Śilā–deity[1] on their crowned heads after bathing it, according to tradition, in the holy Ganges. Thus he appeased his exceeding indignation. He entered the city of Vañci and enshrined with ceremonious consecration the idol of Kaṇṇaki, whose breast was responsible for a revolution, in a temple which was worshipped by many

crowned kings of the earth offering tributes.

Soon after this, Mācāttuvāṉ[2] became an ascetic, hav- ing heard from the gracious Brahmana an account of the inconsolable mourning of Kaṇṇaki, who had shed tears from the carp-like eyes in her moon-like face, and whose dark dusty tresses had fallen over her back as she con- demned the God of Righteousness for the injustice done to Kōvalaṉ resulting in his death at the hands of a detes-table person; whereupon she had stood with flowing tears before the king, who died of his unjust act. His aged wife too gave up her life.

On hearing this (account) the nurse, the chief maid,
and Devanti[3] who had sought refuge with the deity Cāttaṉ, became sorely vexed and went together to see Kaṇṇaki in the great city of Madura, and there heard of the havoc caused by her cast-off breast. They then repaired to the cowherdess Aiyai, the daughter of Mātari, who ceased to

live after the loss of her refugee; and all of them took the

1 The term in the text is aṉaṅku.

2 Cf. Maṇi, canto xxviii, l. 73.

3 News spread to Pukār of the disaster which had overtaken Kaṇṇaki and her husband. Dēvanti, Kaṇṇaki's nurse, and the maid then left for Madura to see their distressed friend.

route along the Vaikai, and ascending the lofty hill,[1] entered the palace of king Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ who had en- shrined the Lady of Chastity, and addressed him on their relationship (to Kaṇṇaki) thus :[2]

SPEECH OF DĒVANTI

'Know me ! I am the companion of that deity protected

by the three crowned kings, who was born in the northern

Himalayas[3] and bathed in the swift flowing

tide of the
Ganges, and whose shoulders are adorned with bangles.
Know me as the companion of the lady of the Cōḷn
country.'

SPEECH OF THE NURSE

'Know me as the nurse of the lady with long eyes, who did not show her anger towards the modest and fair Mātavi[4] but who went clasping her beloved husband's hand to the dreadful forest where even a potful of water could not be found in the wells. Please know that I am
the foster-mother of the lady of cool Pukār.'

1 The hills under
near modern Diṇṭigul.

reference may perhaps be the Paḻni hills
Paḻni is still an important place of pilgrimage to Malayaḷi Hindus.

2 The three who left Pukār for Madura saw Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ and each spoke to him about the greatness of their friend.

3 The stone for the image was taken from the Himalayas. According to Vāstu literature images were also made of earth and wood. But by the time of the Cilappatikāram, śila or stone must have taken their place.

4 As Kaṇṇaki's difficulties were indirectly due to Mātavi, it would have been natural for her to be angry. But Kaṇṇaki's righteous temperament did not allow her to do more than consider how resistless are the decrees of fate.

SPEECH OF THE CHIEF MAID[1]

'Know me as the companion of the lady with the golden bangles who had nothing to say to the mother who gave

her birth, nor even a word for the nurse who brought her up, nor for me either, but followed her husband remembering only her duty as a true wife.[2] Know me, a companion of the lady of Pūmpukār.'

LAMENTATION OF DĒVANTI[5]

'I have done no penance. I did not realize the implication of your bad dream on the day I heard it. O, what have I done? On the day when your mother heard of the havoc caused by your cast-off breast, O lady with the beautiful tresses of hair, she died of grief. O, did you hear, friend, your mother-in-law also died? O, did you hear that, friend?'

LAMENTATION OF THE NURSE

'Mācāttuvān heard of the harm done to Kōvalan by
that wretched man, and the consequent death of the
protecting king. Losing heart, he preferred death to life
and after making several gifts he took to asceticism.*
Did you hear that, mother? O, did you also hear, mother,
of the renunciation of Mānāikan?'

THE CHIEF MAID'S LAMENTATION

'Mātavi heard of the death of your beloved and of
the extreme suffering to you, the lover, and of the crying

1
Aṭittoḷi is, according to the grammatical treatise Tolkāp-
piyam, the daughter of a nurse who serves as the companion and
maid of the daughter of the house.

2 See above, canto xv, ll. 143-4.

3
All the three now address the image of Kaṇṇaki,

4 Mācattuvāṉ and Mānāikaṉ took to an ascetic life. Life
as householders had no more charm for them.

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for shame by common folk, and lost heart. She went to the holy saints living under the *bōdi*

tree,[1] gave away in charity all her wealth, and became a nun. O companion,
did you hear that? O companion, did you also hear of the renunciation of Maṇimēkalai?'

LAMENTATION OF DEVANTI POINTING TO AIYAI[2]

'This unmarried girl is the daughter of the old lady[3] who

gave up her life saying: "I enter the fire. I was not able

to protect the refugee entrusted to me by her (Kavunti)

of doubt-free vision." Do you see, friend, Aiyai of the

lovely teeth? Do you see, friend, this fair daughter of

your aunt?'[4]

CENKUṬṬUVAN SPEAKS

'What, what is this? O, what is this? What is this?

O! I see in the sky the marvellous sight of a lightning-

like figure with golden anklets,[5] waist-band, bangles on her arms, golden ear-rings set with excellent diamonds and other ornaments of superior gold.'

Kaṇṇaki showed her divine form to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ and exclaimed:

1 The term bōdi tree is significant as it proves that both Mātavi and her daughter Maṇimēkalai became Buddhist bikṣuṇis or nuns.

2 Dēvanti now addresses Aiyai who followed her and companions from Madura to the sacred hill.

3 The term Avvai or Auvai here is one of respect.

4 Māma and Māmi (uncle and aunt) are

terms still generally used by Tamilians today when addressing elderly men and women. This form of address has thus been the custom from ancient times.

5

Kaṇṇaki was seen by Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ in the air in the form of a goddess.

'The Pāṇṭyaṉ is blameless.
He is now a good guest in the palace of the king of gods. I am his daughter.[a] I am going to sport on the hill of Veṇvēlāṉ (Skanda); friends, please come with me there, all of you.'

SPEECH OF THE MAIDENS OF VAÑCI[*]

'Maidens of Vañci, O maids with waists like *vañci*- creepers, O maids whose feet are dyed

with lac, who form the retinue of the conquering monarch, all of you, come!

'Come, all of you, and sing about her who devastated
the city of Kūṭal with her breast and discomfited
the king with her anklet. Let us all sing about the
daughter of Teṉṉavaṉ. She came to our country
whose king spoke these words of praise: "Pāṇṭyaṉ
monarchs would not live if their just sceptre deviated from
its path."

'About that beautiful damsel all of us shall sing. Come
along, all of you, we shall sing about the Pāṇṭyaṉ's
daughter.'

THE SPEECH OF THE GROUPS OF

MAIDS

'We said that she was our king's daughter. She said that she was the creeper-like daughter of the king of the

1 Here Kaṇṇaki calls herself the daughter of the Pāṇṭyaṉ king. As the latter was the cause of her transformation into a goddess she claims the Pāṇṭyaṉ as her father. The Veṇvēlāṉ hill cannot be Ceṅkōṭu as the commentator has it. Nor can it be Ceṅkuṉṟam, if Vañci is to be identified with karūr in Coimbatore district. This hill is also known to the Caṅkam classic, Kalittokai (st. 27). But it is difficult to venture a conjecture as to its identification. Probably the reference is to the chain of Paḻṉi hills (see R. Raghava Aiyangar's Vañcimāṉakar, p. 128).

2 Group worship by the people of Vañci.

Vaikai.[1] We shall praise the Vāṉavaṉ (Cēra). Let the

gods praise the king of the Vaikai.'

PRAISE (AND BLESSING)

'Long live the king who surrendered his life[2] to the
tears of the sorrow-stricken maiden prompted by pre-
ordained fate!

'Long live the old dynasty[3] of kings reigning over the
people of Madura encircled by the constantly flooding
Vaikai! Live long!

'Long live the king[4] who made the tall-crowned
monarchs of northern regions bear on their heads the
(stone) image yielded by the king of mountains (the
Himalayas)!

'Long live the king and his ancient[3] dynasty at Vañci
encircled by the Ān-porunai in continual floods! Live
long!

'All of us shall sing to the king of the Kāveri regions.[4]
Let us sing of Pukār, O girls with flower-decked
tresses!'

1 This is in accordance with Kaṇṇaki's own claim to be the daughter of the Pāṇṭyaṉ.

2 As has already been shown this points to the high sense of justice that actuated the Pāṇṭyaṉ monarch. The king here stands euphemistically for the king's line.

3 This shows that the Pāṇṭyaṉ dynasty had a much more ancient history than we would ordinarily imagine.

4 This is in praise of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ who made Vijaya and Kaṉaka carry the stone intended for the image.

5 The reference is to king Neṭuñceḻiyaṉ.

6 It is worthy of note that each of these three Tamil kings lived on the banks of a river. The Aṉ-porunai for the Cēra, the Kāvēri for the Cōḷa, and the Vaikai for the Pāṇṭya show the truth

AMMĀNAI SONG[1]

'O Ammāṉai! who is that strong man who reigned over the sea-girt world and guarded the tall fortress of the king of gods? That powerful person who guarded the tall fortress, O Ammāṉai, know to be the Cōḷa king who pulled down the three fortresses suspended from the heavens. O Ammāṉai, sing of Pukār, the capital of the Cōḷa!

'O Ammāṉai, who is the conquering king[2] praised in heaven for weighing himself and offering

flesh from his
own body, for the sake of a dove? That king who cut off
his flesh, O Ammāṉai, was the king[3] to whom (on a pre-
vious (occasion) a cow appealed for justice. O Ammāṉai,
we shall sing of Pūmpukār, that king's capital!

'O Ammāṉai, who was he that planted the emblem of
the strong tiger on the northern Himalayas when the ele-
phants at the eight cardinal points[4] looked on with unwink-
ing eyes? O Ammāṉai, he who carved his tiger-emblem on
the northern Himalayas was the conquering monarch who

of the theory that

ancient kingdoms and civilizations rose and
flourished on important river beds. It bears

Tamil culture also.
out the antiquity of

1 This section of the Ammāṉai song, consisting of three stanzas of five lines and one stanza of six lines, is sung in praise of the Cōḷa monarch who had his capital in Pukār. Ammāṉai is a wooden ball. The game of ammāṉai is still current among the womenfolk of the Tamil land.

2 The reference is to Śibi Cakravarti.

3 The allusion is to Manunītikaṇṭa Cōḷaṉ.

4 Aṣṭadiggajas in Sanskrit Literature. Legend has it that the universe lies balanced on the tusks of elephants, each elephant supporting a quarter of the world. Here it alludes to the extensive conquests of the king.

with grace brought all the eight directions under one umbrella. Let us sing, O Ammāṉai, of Pūmpukār of that king.

'O Ammāṉai, what is the object of the maidens with
handsome ornaments, singing in their homes holding wood-
en balls in their hands ?
The object of singing (thus) in
their houses is, O Ammāṉai, that their garlanded king
should embrace their full-grown and alluring breasts. If
our king so embraces such full-grown and alluring breasts,
we will sing of the romantic city of Pukār, O Ammāṉai!'

THE (KANTUKA) BALL SONG[1]

'O girl shining like a golden creeper! With golden

necklaces glittering and in harmony with the repeated
tinkling of our lightning-like girdles, let us run in all direc-
tions and strike the rebounding ball saying: "Long live the
Pāṇṭyan, long live he." Let us strike the ball saying:
"Long live he who wears Indra's garland on his chest."

'Let us go, come, sit and move about in front, behind
and everywhere, as if the lustrous creeper-like lightning
of the sky had descended to the earth. Let us run and
strike the rebounding ball saying: "Long live the Pāṇṭyan,
long live he." Let us strike the ball saying: "Long live
he who wears Indra's garland on his chest."

'The rebounding ball did not stay in

our palms: nor
did it rise
up heavenward leaving the vast earth. Let
us go and strike the ball, saying: "Long live
the Pāṇṭyaṉ,
long live he." Let us strike the ball saying:
"Long live
he who wears Indra's garland on his chest.""

I

This section of Kantukavari (or play with balls), consists
of three stanzas of four lines.
Each is sung in praise of the
Pāṇṭyaṉ king reigning at Madura.

THE (ŪCAL) SWINGING SONG[1]

'Seated
let one of us

on the ornamental swing suspended by ropes, standing close to Aiyai stretch out her hands and beating the single time-beat, sing of our king who first destroyed the *kaṭampu*. Shall we not swing ourselves in the swing rolling our palm-like oval eyes? Shall we not swing ourselves in the swing singing about the the cruel bow?

carving of

'Singing about the heroism and valour of the mountain king Poraiyaṉ, our Cēra, who ungrudgingly gave immense quantities of food[a] in the war fought between the five (Pāṇṭavas) and the hundred (Kauravas), shall we not swing in the swing causing our cloud-like tresses to wave? Shall we not thus swing singing about the way in which

the *kaṭampu* was destroyed?

'Shall we sing to the glory of our king, the lord of men, who protects the earth as far as Cape Comorin, abounding in heavy large stones, with his bow, fish and tiger flags, including the fertile country of the Yavaṇas of barbarous speech?[3] Shall we not swing in the swing bending our lightning-like waists? Shall we not sing of the prowess of him who carved the bow-emblem?'

1 This section of Ūcalvari, consisting of three stanzas of five lines each, is in praise of the Cēra king reigning at Vañci.

2 See above, canto xxiii, l. 55; cf. Puṟam., st. 2.

3 Another reference to the extensive conquests of the Cera king. He was not only the overlord of the Tamil kingdom but carried conquests to the very north, including the Yavaṉa country. For the Yavaṉs, see Patiṟṟu., second patikam. It is interesting to note that the Yavaṉas spoke a harsh tongue.

VAḶḶAIPPĀṬṬU OR THE PESTLE SONG[1]

The maidens of Pukār[2] gathered together under the
shade of the flowering *kāṉci* tree to pound valuable pearls
(as rice) using sweet sugarcane as their pestles, singing in
praise of Cempiyaṉ's strong chariot and his discus ensign
and his garlanded shoulders wide and broad. That alone
is song. That song alone is the song which is sung by
these damsels (of Pukār).

The damsels of lofty-towered Madura[3]

pound with
coral pestles, pearls celebrated by poets, singing in praise
of the fish-emblem of the Pañcavaṉ[4] whose shoulders shine
with the garland of the king of the gods. That alone is
song. That song alone is the song which eulogizes the
margosa garland of the Pāṇṭyaṉ.

The damsels of Vañci[5] who pound
priceless pearls with pestles of white ivory in sandalwood mortars, sing of
the worldwide fame of the garlanded Cēra for the de-
struction of the *kaṭampu* after crossing the waves. That
alone is song. That song alone is the song in praise of
the palmyra garland, which enraptures the heart.

Now, it is difficult for those who do not worship the

auspicious feet of Poraiyan[6] of the great bow, to bless our lord of the great earth. Our king's illustrious daughter (Kaṇṇaki) spoke benedictory words: 'May our Ceṅkuṭṭuvan live long.'[7]

1 This section is praise to all the three *principal* Tamil Kingdoms, the Cōḷa, the Pāṇṭya, and the Cēra.

2 Pukār was noted for sugarcane and corals of great value.

3 Madura was noted for superior pearls and coral.

4 Pañcavan is another term for the Pāṇṭyan.

5 Vañci was noted for elephants, sandalwood and also pearls. Thus all the ancient Tamil kingdoms were rich in pearls.

6 Poraiyan is another term for the Cēra.

7 The section appropriately ends with Kaṇṇaki giving her blessing to Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ.

CANTO XXX

VARANTARU KATAI

OR

THE BOON

THE great king who had subdued the north saw with his own eyes the divine form of Kaṇṇaki. He looked well at Dēvantikai and asked her: 'Who is that Maṇimēkalai for whom you cried out your heart? What were the grounds for her renunciation? Please tell me

that.'

Dēvantikai blessed the king: 'May the king's fame grow without diminution! May the country shower plenty!' She then narrated to him the great renunciation[1] of Maṇimēkalai, celebrated among the group of dancers with handsome waist ornaments. She began by saying that her dark tresses had grown in luxuriance so as to be divided into (the usual) five plaits, and her cool eyes delightfully red in the corners had acquired a new charm of which she was unconscious. (Continuing her description of Maṇimēkalai she said:) Within her tender coral lips, her pearl-like teeth were not fully grown; her lovely breasts had developed; her bosom had broadened; her

slender waist became narrower and her pretty *alkul* had widened; her two thighs were rounded; her shapely tender feet, unable even to bear (the weight) of

1 Maṇimēkalai, the lovely daughter of the courtesan Mātavi and Kōvalaṉ, renounced her worldly life at an impressionable age, and overcame all temptations. She performed such miraculuos works as inspired the poet Cāttaṉār to compose an epic recording her life and career.

ornaments, became glossy to the view. Yet men of noble families did not recognize her as a professional dancer because the dancing master had not initiated her into that art.

'At that time Mātavi's good

mother[1] asked her daughter: "What is your intention? What am I to do?" Then Mātavi called Maṇimēkalai to her, saying: "Come here, my dear modest daughter," and removed her locks[2] with the flower-wreaths thereon, thus making the bodiless god fling to the bare ground his flower dart and his bow of sugarcane. She was admitted to the Buddhist Sangha to follow their *dharma*.

'When the king and his citizens heard this they felt as sorry as one who had dropped a priceless gem into the deep sea. The well-spoken saint[3] said very kindly: "The lovely girl expressed to me her wish for renunciation." Because that fair maiden changed her fair appearance despite her youthful age, I lamented.'

After speaking thus to the king, Dēvantikai became god-possessed,[4] and the flower wreaths on her locks fell loose behind her; her brows began to quiver; her coral lips shut to; her white teeth were
her words were not normal; her

set in a strange smile;
lovely face perspired;

1 The name of Mātavi's mother was Citrāpati. See repro- ached Mātavi for having failed in her duty of initiating Maṇimē- kalai into the art of dancing.

2 The Buddhist bhikṣuṇi was expected to cast off all her adornments and shave her head. See above, canto xxvii, ll. 107-8.

3 The saint under reference is Aṛavaṇa Aṭikaḷ. See S. K. Aiyangar's Maṇimēkalai in its Historical Setting, pp. 221-30.

4 It was the god Cāttaṉ who entered into the person of Dēvantikai and served as the medium between the god and man.

her fair eyes reddened and her hands were lifted up in a threatening manner. Then she moved her legs and rose from her seat. Unrecognized by many was her under- standing. She was in a state of bewilderment. With parched tongue she spoke inspired words before the king of the blossoming *kuṟiñci* region.

.

'Among the modest, good, and beautiful womenfolk who have come here to see the installation of this goddess, there are the twin girls born to the handsome wife of Araṭṭan Ceṭṭi, as also the little daughter of Cēṭak-kuṭumpi,[1] engaged in the service of the Lord reposing upon the Divine Serpent in the Golden Temple (Āṭaka- māṭam). Near the temple of Maṅkalā-Dēvi[2] there is a sky-high hill on the red crests of which stands a big bow-like rock with many pools. From their midst issues forth water, with white stones like small mustard seeds, and red stones resembling

murukku flowers which seem like dissolved rice flour.

'As those who bathe in those pools will gather know- ledge of their past births, I[3] brought that water and handed it over to you, O Brahmana Māṭalaṉ, when you were sit-ting at the portal of that temple and said: "Receive this. It is meant that you should preserve it. Are you not keeping it in that pot within your string-bag (*uri*) in your

1 A member of the *Arcaka* community.

2 Dr Swaminatha Aiyar in a note says that the allusion is to Kaṇṇaki. Pandit Raghava Aiyangar examines this and locates the place as the Durgā temple in the village Mangalam, some nine miles to the north-west of Viṟuddāchalam (Cēraṉ Ceṅkuṭṭu- vaṉ, p. 8, n. 2). It is interesting to note the name Maṅkalādēvi-ammaṉ occurring in an epigraph (Ep. Rep. 420 of 1907) to whom the king of Kērala assigns certain lands as gifts.

3 I, referred to above, stands for Cāttaṉ.

hand ?' As that water will not lose its divine quality so long as the sun and the moon exist, if you now sprinkle it upon these three little girls you will find them remembering their past births. Know me to be Pāsaṇṭaṉ[1], appearing within the person of this Brahmana lady."'

At this Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was lost in wonder, and turned towards Mātalaṉ when he said with good cheer: 'Hear this, O king! Let all your ills disappear. Lady Mālati once offered milk to the child of her co-wife when fate pursued her and death cut short its life. Mourning inconsolably, and utterly downcast for the child, she prostrated herself, asking for grace, before Pāsaṇṭaṉ (Cāttaṉ) who came to her in the form of her child[2] and said: "Mother, give up your great grief" and removed her affliction. He who performed this miracle (Cāttaṉ), grew up well tended under the fostering care of his mother (Mālati) and her co-wife in the ancient family of the Kāppiyas.[3] He then married Dēvantikai by going round the fire. And after living with her for eight years, he showed her his

1 See above, canto ix, l. 15, where the term pāsaṇṭaccāttaṉ occurs. In the light of this passage it is reasonable to assume that the word Pāsaṇṭaṉ stands for the god Cāttaṉ.

2 The account smacks of mythology. It is said that God Himself came to Mālati in the form of her deceased child, grew up in her house, was married, and after a brief period as a householder, returned to His shrine.

3 Dr Swaminatha Aiyar identifies Kāppiyakkuḍi with a village south-east of Shiyāli. Pandit M. Raghava Aiyangar is of opinion that the reference is to the family of Kāppiyas, perhaps Kāvvagōtra. If the latter construction be accepted, we are re- minded of the grammatical treatise Tolkāppiyam whose author

was evidently a Kāppiyaṉār, a member of that name.

the family or gotra of

youthful divine form and disappearing said: "Come to my temple."[1]

'When I was in the temple of Maṅkalā-Dēvi, this god appeared before me in the form of a Brahmana and gave me this string-bag with the pot in it and asking me to keep it safe, went away. But he never appeared before me again. I took it away with me. Just now, the All-Wise appeared in the person of the Brahmana lady and said to me: "Sprinkle that water." O king, let us, therefore, sprinkle it over these damsels and know the truth.'

When he had thus sprinkled it, the knowledge of their previous births rose up in their minds and (the mother of Kaṇṇaki) began to sob thus:[2] 'O my

daughter, O my helpmate! Without even caring for me who sympathized with you because your celebrated husband misbehaved towards you, you went to an alien city alone but for the company of your husband, and suffered exceeding trouble. O my dearest! Will you not come and relieve me of my great sorrow?'

Another (the mother of Kōvalan) said.[3] 'O, you betook yourself away in the dead of night alone and in misery, with my good daughter-in-law staying with me. Grieving over your departure, I began to rave. I can no more endure this. Will you not come to me, my son?'

The third (Mātari) said:[4] 'I left for the bathing ghat of the Vaikai of fresh floods. When I came back I heard

1 See, for details, canto ix, ll. 5-36.

2 The mother of Kaṇṇaki, now born as one of the twin daughters of Araṭṭaṉ Ceṭṭi.

3 The mother of Kōvalaṉ, born now as one of the twin daughters of Araṭṭaṉ Ceṭṭi.

4 Mātari, the cowherdess, now born as the daughter of a Brahmana arcaka.

(the news) from the youngsters of the
I did not see you in my house. O
famous ancient city.
my dear, my dear,
where have you hidden yourself?'

In this manner the three young bangled girls with lisping mouths, lamented again and again and sobbed and wept, uttering their elders' words before the warlike king with golden jewels on his chest. When the king of the *pōntai* garland and victorious anklet looked at the face of Māṭalaṉ, the Brahmana wearing the sacred thread on his chest, he blessed him: 'O king of kings, long may you live!' and spoke what he remembered: 'These three were, in previous births, much attached to the devoted wife of Kōvalaṉ who seized the must elephant's tusk to release (from its clutches) a Brahmana suffering deep sorrow, and thus attained the form of a celestial; but they could not follow her to the other world as they had performed no other act of virtue. Because of their excessive attachment born of heartfelt love towards the lovely lady (Kaṇṇaki) like

the golden creeper, who fearlessly approached this ancient great city of Vañci, these two were born[1] as twins, to the great satisfaction of the good and modest wife of Araṭṭaṉ Ceṭṭi; and this elderly cowherdess (Mātari) who in her previous birth was devoted to the charming lady (Kaṇṇaki) and performed a *kuravai* dance has now been born as the little daughter of Cēṭakkuṭumpi in the service of Lord Vishṇu.[2]

It is not strange that people who do good things attain heaven and people who have worldly minds are re-born, and that good and bad deeds have their

1 Here the poet brings out the great Hindu ideal that detachment and not attachment leads to salvation with no more rebirths.

2 The kuraval dance is sacred to Viṣhṇu and hence Mātarī was born in a family devoted to the service of Viṣhṇu.

own reward and that those born should die, and those dead should be re-born. Those are ancient truths.[1]

'You who were born through the grace of Him who rides on the sacred Bull[2] and have won distinction as a king in this wide world, saw, clear as an object held in the palm of your hand, the fruits of righteous deeds and the forms of holy people. Live long from aeon to aeon protecting the earth! Live long, gracious monarch.'

Pleased with what the Brahmana Māṭalaṉ said, the king endowed[3] grants to the temple of the ever-youthful Pattiṉi who had twisted off her breast and thereby raised flames which enveloped the noisy *kūṭal* of the great Pāṇṭyaṉ kingdom, much celebrated in poetical themes. He further ordered the conduct of daily festivals by in- structing Dēvantikai to offer flowers, perfume and incense.

The monarch of the world circumambulated the shrine thrice and stood proffering his respects. In front of him the Arya kings[4] released from prison,

kings removed[5] from the central jail, the Koṅku ruler of the Kuṭaku, the

1 The great truth that was taught by Kṛishṇa on the battle- field of Kurukṣētra to Arjuna. The Gitā says:

Jātasya hi dhruvō mṛtyuh dhruvam janma mṛtasya ca.

2 Another statement to testify that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ's religion was Saivism.

3 The evidence of epigraphy shows that this custom of endowing temples was practised by all Hindu kings in all periods of Indian history.

4 The Arya kings are Kaṉaka and Vijaya.

5 Cf. A.S.I., 1905-6, p. 170.

king of Malva and Kayavaku (Gajabahu),[1] the king of sea-girt Ceylon, prayed reverentially to the deity thus: 'Please grace our countries by your presence just as you have done this auspicious day, a fête-day at Imayavarm- pan's sacrifice.' Then a voice from the welkin issued forth: 'I have granted the boon.'

At this Ceṅkuṭṭuvan, the other kings and their valorous armies praised the deity in pregnant words as if they had gained salvation (*viṭu*).[2] Then with the seeker of truth. Brahmana Māṭalan, and with kings of low-sounding anklets who bowed at his feet, Ceṅkuṭṭuvan entered the sacrificial hall.[3] I[4] also went in. Afterwards Devantikai stood up before me god-possessed. She came to me, and said: 'In the artistic Audience Hall of the ancient city of Vañci, when you were seated by your father's side, you frowned upon the astrologer who predicted

indications of your succeeding to the throne, so as to relieve the affliction of Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ famous for his chariot[5] forces and his fragrant *koṅku* garland. You then went away to the Kuṇavāyirkōṭṭam[6] and

standing before

1 Here is evidence that Gajabāhu introduced the Pattiṉi cult into Ceylon and this cannot be untrue as we are still able to

trace remains of this cult today. See Appendix iv.

2 Viṭu stands for mokṣa in Sanskrit.

3 This is definite evidence that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ was a follower of the Vēdic religion. The following line throws welcome light on the personal religion of Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ also. If he had been converted to the Jaina faith he would not have attended the sacri- fices performed according to Vēdic rules, with the help of the Vēdic Brahmanas.

4

I stands for the author, Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ.

5 We have to understand that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ had not only a

powerful elephant corps but also a strong chariot force.

6 The story of how Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ became an ascetic is told by Pattiṉi whose spirit is said to have entered Dēvantikaḷ.

eminent saints (*paṭiyōr*) you renounced all thought of the

burdens of this earth in order to secure the kingship of

the vast realm afar-off and of eternal bliss, incapable of

approach by even the faculty of reason.[1]

'O distinguished and good people, you have now

heard with distinctness the auspicious and benevolent

words of the daughter of the gods (Kaṇṇaki) who pro -

claimed my story (through Dēvantikai). Rise above pleasure

and pain in accordance

with the approved course of conduct.[2]

Know God, and serve those who have known Him.

Fear speakihg falsehood. Avoid tale-bearing. Refrain

from meat-eating and abjure injury to any living being.

Give gifts and perform the prescribed penance. Do not

forget the good done to you. Despise bad friendship. Do

not give false evidence, and never depart from words of

truth. Do not fail to join assemblies of people learned in

dharama. Strive ever to escape the meeting-places of the

unrighteous.

'Avoid other people's wives, and give succour to

those who are dying. Protect the household

virtues, but

reject what is bad. Abstain immediately from drinking,

theft, lust, falsehood and useless company.

Youth, wealth

1 These lines seem to be at once a reproduction of the great

philosophic truth where occur the following:

yatō vācō nivartantē |

aprāpya manasā saḥ |

Taitt. Āraṇ. 8. 4. 1 and 8. 9. 1.

ānandam brahmaṇo vidvān

| na bibheti kutascanēti |

Taitt. Up. 2. 4. 1 and 2. 9. 1.

2 This line and the following are a categorical list dharmas to be observed by all persons irrespective of caste

of

or

creed. This the Hindus call Sanātana Dharma—what we may

term the ethical aspect of Hinduism. This portion of the canto shows strong influence of the teaching of the Kuraḷ.

and the body are impermanent.[1] You cannot escape from the days allotted to you: nor can you avoid what will happen. So seek the best help to the land of your final destination (Heaven). Do all this, O dwellers on this wide prosperous earth.'

Kaṭṭurai

'Of the three crowned monarchs, the garlanded ruler (Ceṅkuṭṭuvan) of the western kingdom of undiminished glory was born in the line of the Cēras. His virtue, martial valour and achievements, the glory of his ancient flourishing city, its gorgeous, unceasing festivals and the appearance of Dēvas, the wealth of the subjects abiding in his kingdom

of unceasing prosperity, their abundance of provisions, songs and dances with their well-defined inter- relationships, his army of sword-warriors who achieved decisive victory in battles by righteous methods, his success in pursuing the enemy (at a long distance) in the expansive foaming sea,[2] and his expedition to the banks of the holy Ganges—all these deeds which form a part[3] of his career, are narrated in the Vañcikkāṇṭam.

1 The fundamental teaching of Hinduism is that nothing goes with the dying man except his righteous deeds. or unrighteous

2 This shows that Ceṅkuṭṭuvaṉ had an equally formidable naval force.

3 The author here acknowledges that only a part of the career of the Cēra monarch is given. He did not furnish a full account of his life as the contents did not warrant it.

NURKATTURAI

OR

EPITOME OF THE EPIC

So ends the *Cilappatikāram*, which really ends with the contents of the story in the *Maṇimēkalai*[1]. In the manner in which lofty hills are reflected in a mirror, it expresses the essence of the cool Tamil country bounded[2] by the Kumari, Vēṅkaṭam and the eastern and western seas, in its two quarters of pure and impure Tamil[3] comprising the

five regions (*tiṇais*) where dwell man and gods devoted to duty
and to the common practice[4] of *dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma*;
and it deals in chaste language expressive of good sense
in flawless rythm, with *akam* (love) and *puṟam* (war)[5], and
with worthy songs (*pāṭal*), *eḷāḷ*[6] *paṇ*, *pāṇi*, *araṅku*,[7]
vilakku, and *āṭal*[8] and other things which were in
conformity with established rules of the well-known forms
of *vari*, *kuravai* and *sētam*[9] couched in perfect and
understandable Tamiḷ.

1 The epic Maṇimēkalai is a continuation of the Cilappati-
kāram.

2 For the boundary limits of Tamiḷakam see Vīrasōḷiyam.
Kumari is Cape Comorin and Vēṅkaṭam the

Tirupati Hills.

3 Two kinds of Tamil were in vogue.

4 The Cilappatikāram is itself a treatise on the *Trivarga* which is *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*.

5 This presupposes a period when anthologies of the Akam and Puṟam, have been collected under different heads and used as books.

6 *Eḻāl* is another term for yāḻ.

7 *Araṅku* is drama.

8 *Āṭel* represents different kinds of dances.

9 *S'ētam* according to the Tamil Lexicon is an element in dancing. It may perhaps refer to the Koṭṭiccētam.

THE CILAPPATIKARAM ENDS

APPENDIX I

USE OF SANSKRIT WORDS AND THE DATE OF THE EPIC

BELOW is given a transliteration of Canto iv, 'Antimālaic-cirappucceykātai'. This canto has been chosen at random to show roughly the percentage of Sanskrit words in the text. The Sanskrit words in this canto are all italicized for the sake of easy reference. A counting of the total words in the canto furnishes the number 288. Out of these, thirty two, or eleven per cent, are Sanskrit words. In other words, for every eight Tamil words we meet with one Sanskrit word. Sanskrit

expressions form one-ninth of the text. This shows clearly that the author of the *Cilappatikāram* lived centuries before the authors of the *Tēvāram* and *Tivyappirapantam* in which the percentage of Sanskrit words is very much higher. We know definitely that these were compositions extending from the fifth to the tenth century A.D., and it is reasonable to assume that the *Cilappatikāram* must have been composed very much earlier than the fifth century A.D. As it would take some considerable length of time to raise the percentage of Sanskrit words from 11 per cent to 30 per cent, we cannot be far wrong if we assign the composition of the

epic to the second century A.D.

ANTIMĀLAIC CIṞAPPUCCEY KĀTAI

Virikatir parappi *yulaka*muḻu tāṇṭa
Vorutaṉit tikiri yuravōṟ kāṉe
Nankaṉ vāṉat taṉinilā virikkun

Tiṅkaḷañ celvaṉ yāṉṭuḷaṉ kolleṉat
Ticaimukam pacantu cemmalark

kaṇkaṉ

Muḻuniṟ vāra muḻumeyum paṉittut

Tiraini rāṭai yirunila maṭantai
Yaraicukeṭut talamvaru mallaṟ kalaik
Karaikeḻu kuṭikaḷ kaiṭalai vaippa
Varaipōku kuṭikaḷo ṭorutiṟam paṟṟi
Valampaṭu tāṉai maṉṉa rilvaḷip
Pulampaṭa viṟutta viruntiṉ maṉṉariṟ

Rāḻtuṉai tuṟantōr taṉittuya reytak
Kātalarp puṉarntōr kaḻimakiḻ veytak
Kuḻalvaḷar mullaiyiṟ kōvalartammoṭu
Maḻalait tumpi vāyvait tūṭa
Vaṟukāṟ kurumpeṟin tarumpupoṭi *vāciañ*
Ciṟukāṟ celvaṉ maṟukiṟ ṟūṟṟa
Velvaḷai makaḷir *maṉi*viḷak keṭuppa
Mallaṉ mūtūr mālaivan tiṟutteṉa
Viḷaiya rāyiṉum pakaiyaracu kaṭiyuñ
Cerumāṉ ṭeṉṉar *kula*muta lākali
Nanti vāṉattu veṇpiṟai tōṉṟip
Puṉkaṇ mālaik kurumpeṟin toṭṭip
Pāṉmayiṟ ṟiriyātu pāṟkatir parappi
Mīṉara cāṇṭa veḷḷi viḷakkat
Tilvaḷar mullaiyoṭu *mallikai* yaviḻnta
Palpūñ cēkkaip paḷḷiyuṭ polintu
Centukirk kōvai ceṉṟēn talku
Lantukiṉ *mēkalai* yacaintaṉa varunta
Nilavu*ppayaṉ* koḷḷu neṭunilā muṟṟattuk
Kalaviyum pulaviyum kātalaṟ kaḻittāṅk
Kārva neñcamoṭu kōvalaṟ ketirik
Kōlan koṇṭa *mātavi* yaṉṟiyun
Kuṭaticai marunkiṉ Vaḷḷayir taṉṉoṭu

Kuṇaticai marunkiṟ kāraki ṟuṟantu

Vaṭamalaip piṟanta vāṉkēḷ vaṭṭattut
Teṉmalaip piṟanta *candaṉa* maṟukat
Tāmaraik koḷumuṟit *tātu*paṭu ceḷumalark

Kāmaru kuvaḷaik kaḻunīr mamalarp
Paintaḷirp paṭalai parūkkā *ṭāraṉ*
Cuntaraccuṇṇat tukaḷoṭu maḷaiyic
Cindupu parinta ceḷumpūñ cekkai
Mandamā rutattu mayankiṉar malintāṅk
Kāviyan koḷuna rakalat toṭunkik
Kāviyan kaṇṇāṟ kaḷittuyileyta
Vañceñ cīraṭi yaṉicilam poḷiya
Meṉṟuki ḷalkuṉ mēkalai niṅkak
Konkai muṉṟiṟ *kunkuma* meḻutāṉ
Maṅkala vaṇiyiṟ Piṟitaṇi makiḻāḷ
Koṭunkuḻai tuṟantu vaṭintuvīḻ kātiṉa
Tiṅkaḷ vāṇmukañ ciṟuviyar piriyac

Cenkaya neṭunka *ṉañcaṉa* maṟappap
Pavaḷa vāṉuta *ṟilaka* miḷappat
Tavaḷa vāṉakai kōvala ṉiḷappa
Maiyiruṅ *kūnta* ṉeyyaṉi maṟappak
Kaiyaṟu neñcattuk kaṇṇaki yaṉṟiyum
Kātalarp pirinta mātar nōtaka
Vūtulaik kuruki ṉuyirttaṉa roṭuṅki
Vēṉiṟ paḷḷi mēvātu kaḻintu
Kūtirppaḷḷik kuṟunka ṉaṭaittu
Malayattāramu manimut tāramu
Malarmulai yākat taṭaiyātu varuntat
Tāḻik kuvaḷaiyoṭu taṇcen kaḻunīr
Viḷpūñ cekkai mēvātu kaḻiyat
Tuṇaipuṇa raṇṇat tūviyiṟ ceritta
Viṉaiyaṉai mempaṭat tiruntutuyil peṟā
Tuṭaipperun koḷunaro ṭūtaṟ *kālat*
Tiṭaikkumi ḷeṟintu kaṭaikkuḷai yōṭṭik
Kalankā vuḷḷam kalankak kaṭaicivantu
Vilankinimir neṭuṅkaṉ pulampumut turaippa
Vaṇṇa meṉṉaṭai naṇṇṟp poykai
Yāmpa ṉāṟun tempoti naṟuviraiṭ

Tāmaraic cevvāyat taṉṉaraṟ kūntaṟ
Pāṉvāy vaṇṭu nōtiṟam pāṭak
Kāṉvaru kuvaḷaik kaṇmalar viḻippaṉ
Puḷvāy *muraca* moṭu poṟimayiṟ vāraṇattu
Muḷvāyc *canka* muṟaimuṟai yārppa
Vuravuṉiṟp parappi ṉūrtuyi leṭuppi
Yiravut talaippeyarum vaikaṟai kāṟu
Maraiyiruḷ *yāmattum* pakalum tuñcāṟ
Viraimalar vāḻiyoṭu karuppuvil lēnti
Makara velkoṭi maintaṉ ṟiritara
Nakaran kāva ṉaṉisiṟan tatuveṉ.

FOURTH

'TIRUVĀYMOḺI-PUKAḺUNALLORUVAṈ

(*From Tivyappirapantam*)

1 Pukaḻum nal oruvaṉeṉko ? Poruvilciṟp *pūmiye*ṉko ?
Tikaḻumtaṉparavaiyeṉko ? Tīyeṉko?

*Vāyu*venko ?
Nikaḷum *ākācam*eṉko ? Nīḷcuṭaṭiraṉṭumeṉko ?
Ikaḷvil ivvaṉaittumeṉko ?
*Kaṇṇaṉa*ikkūvumāṟe.

2 Kūvumāṟ aṟiyamāṭṭēṉ kuṉṟaṅkaḷ aṉaittumeṉko ?
Mēvuciṟ māṟiyeṉko ? viḷaṅku *tārakaikaḷ*eṉko ?
Nāviyal *kalaikaḷ*eṉko ? *ñāṉa*nallāviyeṉko ?
Pāvucirkka*ṇṇaṉ* emmāṉ *Pankayak kaṇṇaṉaiye.*

3 *Pankayak kaṇṇaṉ*eṉko ? *Pavaḷ*accev vāyaṉeṉko ?
Ankatir aṭiyaṉeṉko ? *Añcaṉa vaṇṇeṉ*eṉko ?
Cenkatir muṭiyaṉeṉko ? Tirumaṟu mārvaṉeṉko ?
*Cankucakkarattaṉ*eṉko ? *Cātimāṇikkat*taiye.

4 *Cātimāṇikkam*eṉko ? *cavi*koḷpoṉ *muttam*eṉko ?
*Cātinalvayiram*enko ? Tavivilcir viḷakkamenko ?
*Āṭiyam cōti*ēnko ? *ātiyam Puraṭaṉ*eṉko ?
Ātumil *kālatentai accutaṉ amalaṉaiye.*

5 *Accutan amalan*enko?
aṭiyavar viṉaikeṭukkum
Naccumā maruntamenko? nalankaṭ al
*amutam*eṉko?
Accuvaik kaṭṭiyeṉko? aṛucuvai yaṭicileṉko?
Neyccuvait tēṛaleṉko? kaṉiyeṉko?
Pāleṉkēno?

6 Pāleṉko? ṉāṉku*vēdap payaṉ*enko?
Camayaniti
Nūleṉko? Nuṭaṅkukeḷvi icaiyeṉko?
Ivaṛṛuḷṉalla
Mēlanko? viṉaiyiṉ mikka *payaṉ*enko?
*kaṇṇaṉ*enko?
Mālenko? *māyaṉ*eṉko? vānavar
*āti*aiyye.
7 Vāṉavar*ātiy*eṉko? Vānavar
*daivam*eṉko?
Vāṉavar *bhōkam*eṉko? vānavar
muṛṛumenko?
Ūnamil celvameṉko? ūnamil

*cuvarkam*eṉko ?

Unamil *mōkkam*enko ? Oḷi*maṇi*

*vaṇṇaṉ*aiye.

8 Oḷi*maṇi vaṇṇaṉ*enko ?

oruvaneṉṟettaniṉṟa

Naḷiramatic *caṭaiyaṉ*eṉko? nāṉ*mukak*

kaṭavuḷeṉko?

Aḷimakiḷantu *ulakam*ellām paṭaittavai

yātta niṉṟa

Kaḷimalart *tuḷavaṉ* emmāṉ *kaṇṇaṉai*

māyaṉaiye.

9 *Kaṇṇaṉai māyaṉ*taṉṉaik

kaṭalkaṭaintu *amutam*koṇṭa

Aṇṇalai *accutaṉai aṉantaṉ*ai,

*aṉantaṉ*taṉmēl

Naṇṇiṉaṉkuṟaikiṉṟāṉai

jñālamuṇṭumiḷnta mālai

Eṉṉumāṟu aṟiyamāṭṭēn yāvaiyum

yavarumtāṉe.

10 Yāvaiyum yavarumtāṉāy

avaravar*camayam*tōṟum

Tōyvilaṉpulaṉaintukkum colappaṭāṉ

uṉarviṉ *mūrti*

Āvicēruyirinuḷḷāl āṭumōr paṟṟilāta
*Pāvaṉai*yataṉaikkūṭil avanaiyum

kūṭalāme.

11 Kūṭivaṉṭaṟaiyum taṉtark kontalpol

*vannan*tannai

Māṭalarpoḷil kurukūr vaṉ *Caṭakōpaṉ*

conna

Pāṭalōrāyirattuḷ Ivaiyum

orupattumvallār

Vīṭila *bōkam*aiti virumpuvar

*amarar*moyitte.

APPENDIX II

ASTRONOMICAL DATA AND THE DATE OF THE *CILAPPATIKĀRAM*

IN commenting on the first three lines of Canto x of the *Cilappatikāram*, Aṭiyārkkunallār furnishes some interesting astronomical data as to the commencement and duration of Indra's festival, the sea reverie of Kōvalaṉ and Mātavi, and the date on which Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki left Pukār for Madura. The texts in question give only a hint as to the time of starting for Madura; but collecting the details as given in the *Maṇimēkalai*, and in 'Kaṭalāṭu- kātai', Aṭiyārkkunallār has done some valuable research which deserves our close examination and scrutiny. As I have remarked in the footnote on the three opening lines of Canto x, the late L. D. Swamikannu Pillai put the date to severe test and came to the conclusion that the premises were incorrect. I felt the subject required further investi- gation, and with the aid of my friend Mr P. R. Chidam bara Aiyar of the Kodaikanal Observatory, I have been able to arrive at a more or less satisfactory conclusion.

Let me first state what Aṭiyārkkunallār has to say.
The full moon day in the month of *Cittirai*, during which the festival of Indra commenced, fell on a Saturday. The festival was celebrated for four weeks. It ended on the twenty-eighth day of the month of *Vaikāsi* during the sea reverie when Kōvalan suspected Mātavi's attitude towards him and *vice versa*. This resulted in their misunderstanding and consequent separation. According to Aṭiyārkkunal- lār's calculation, this day of misunderstanding (*ūṭutal*) was a Monday, the thirteenth *tithi* of *Pūrvapaksa* when

the ruling asterism was *Anusa*. The very next day, i.e. the twenty-ninth day of *Vaikāsi* (which

was a Tuesday and the fourteenth *tithi* of the *Pūrvapaksa*), during the asterism *Keṭṭai*, very early in the morning, before the sun rose but when the moon had disappeared, Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki set forth for Madura. Aṭiyārkkunallār remarks that that was a particularly inauspicious time and led to the death of those who started at that particular hour.[1]

In a later Canto[2] Aṭiyārkkunallār tells us in an informing note that the very day when the outskirts of Madura were reached by Kōvalaṉ and Kaṇṇaki was the last day of the month of *Āṉi*. As we have already seen, according to that commentator the couple left Pukār for Madura on the 29th of *Vaikāsi*, and if his calculation is to be believed, it took a full month and a little more for the

travellers to reach Madura. If they had started on the 29th of *Vaikāsi* which was a Tuesday, and if they reached the outskirts on the last day of *Āni*, then it must have been a Thursday. We hear in a still later Canto[3] that Madura was destroyed by fire on a day of Bharaṇi-Kiṛuttikai, *Asṭamī* during the dark fortnight in the month of *Āṭi*, on a Friday about midnight. An attempt has been made, rightly, to reject Mr Swamikannu Pillai's theory of 756 A.C.; for, his calculations do not seem to satisfy any of the data furnished either by the text or the commentary.[4] Evidently the burning of Madura took place on the first of *Āṭi* which was a

1 See also his commentary on ll. 5-6 'Kaṭalāṭukātai.'

2 xiii,

'Purañcāriiruttakātai.' ll. 30-7, and especially l. 36.

3 xxiii, ll. 133-7.

4 See K. G. Sankar's article in Q.J.M.S., Vol. VIII, pp. 34-60. But his theory of 157 A.C. also does not cover all astronomical details.

Friday. On the last day of

Āṉi, they were Mātaris' guests for the day and in the evening Kōvalaṉ went with the anklet into the city and was executed. Immediately Kaṇṇaki met the king and cursed that the city be con- sumed by flames.

While we are discussing the date of the *Cilappatikāram* from an astronomical viewpoint, it is better to say a word about the reference to Friday in the epic. Years ago when Indological researches were in their infancy, Dr Fleet suggested that India borrowed weekdays from Greece about A.D. 400 and put

them to popular use not earlier than A.D. 800. Granting that India is a borrower in this respect, she need not necessarily be indebted to the Greeks who were themselves borrowers and perhaps had no knowledge of weekdays before the first century A.D. A more reasonable suggestion would be that borrowing had taken place direct from the Chaldeans whose intercourse with India from at least the time of Darius (500 B.C.) can- not be disputed. The use of weekdays in ancient Hindu literature is not rare. The *Purāṇas*, like the *Matsya* (ch. 93, ll. 10-20) and *Vishṇu* (Bk. I, ch. 12), refer to planets in the order of weekdays. The *Vaikhānasa sūtra*, which cannot be later than the second century B.C., mentions the *Budhavāra*. Besides, we perform the *arghyam* every day in weekday order during our *sandhya* prayers. This has to be traced to the *Parisiṣṭas* of *Āsvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*. It may be contended that the *Parisiṣṭas* are held to be later than the texts of the *Gṛhyasūtra*.

Even if this position were accepted, that portion cannot be later than by one or two centuries. These facts, among others, show

the ancient use of weekdays in the Hindu calendar and the reference to Friday cannot be taken as an argument to assign a later date for the composition.

Proceeding to work upon the data given by Aṭiyārkkunallār, and by bringing the evidence of the Gajabāhu synchronism to clinch it, we find the year A.D. 174 answers nearly perfectly. In this year the first of *Cittirai* was a Tuesday, and would be 16 March in the Gregorian calendar. The following table may clarify our position:

174 A.D.

1st *Cittirai* =

First new moon in the

year =

Duration from new moon to new moon =

Days in the month =

First new moon in *Vaikāsi* =

Interval to full moon =

Days in the month =

Full moon day (May) =

16 March (Tuesday)

4·7997

20 7997 March (Saturday)

29·5306

50·3303

31

19·3303 (April, Monday)

14·7653[1]

34·0956

30

4·0956 (Tuesday) in *Vaikāsi*

This Tuesday the fourth of May in A.D. 174 coincides with *Kāṭṭai naksatram* in the early morning. What we have to note here is that *Paurṇima* and not *Caturtasi* ends

1 If we substract the interval in tithi 14·7653 from 19·3033, we get 4·5650, when occurred the full moon in April, on a Sunday.

early in the forenoon on Tuesday. There is the *Keṭṭai naksatram* before sunrise on that day. In questions of chronology from an astronomical standpoint, there is bound to be a certain amount of uncertainty. This is largely due to the different *Siddhāntas* or systems followed by different schools of thought, such as the *Sūryasiddhānta*, the *Āryasiddhānta*, *Vākya*, etc. What system was in use in the age of Iḷaṅkō-Aṭikaḷ, the author of the epic, it is rather difficult to determine. But for our purpose, there is indicated the astronomical fact that on the early morn- ing in question the moon had set before the sun rose, although it is difficult to know, in the absence of accurate data, what was the actual interval

between the setting of the moon and the rising of the sun.

As to whether *sauramāna* or *cāndramāna* was in vogue at the time, there is no room for doubt, since the word *Cittirai* (which is the one used by Aṭiyārkkunallār) has always meant the solar month, the corresponding lunar month being known as *Caitra*. As the text of Aṭiyārkkunallār is clear in the use of the expression *Cittirai* and not *Caitra*, it can be easily conceded that the commentator used the *sauramāna* method of reckoning. I am aware that we should not rely entirely on the astronomical combination as evidence in itself. For the argument is that, as the event took place at a particular time of day when a particular astronomical combination was prevailing, a certain number of cycles of the moon in its two aspects, viz. *tithi* and *naksatra*, must coincide with a certain number of revolutions of the sun, along with a certain number of weeks, and multiples of the hours in a day. This will be the L.C.M. of the sidereal period of the moon, the synodic period of the moon, the solar year, the week, the hours in a day.

As one is not divisible by the other, roughly

the product

of all these quantities has to be taken to be the period that would elapse before the same *tithi* and *naksatra* on the same day of the week could be expected to occur again at that particular hour of the day in that particular part of the year. This can by no means be a short period. This particualr case, one may say, would only recur after some centuries. We can therefore easily set aside 756 A.C. fixed by the late Swamikannu Pillai.

My object in examining the data furnished by Aṭiyark- kunallar was to see whether it would supplement other inferable historical facts which have led us to fix the age of the composition of the *Cilappatikāram* in the second half of the second century A.D. Our examination has proved beyond doubt that the astronomical data given by Aṭiyārkkunallar are

very strong contributory evidence for fixing the date as the second century A.D. The details furnished by the commentator fit in with the year A.D. 174, and this date fully satisfies the Gajabāhu synchron- ism as Gajabāhu had ascended the throne three years earlier in A.D. 171.

APPENDIX III

MUSIC IN THE *CILAPPATIKĀKAM*[1]

THE ancient Tamils possessed a highly developed system of music. This is evident from a perusal of the Tamil classics. Their musical culture was at a high level.

Works dealing exclusively with the science of

music were written during the Caṅkam period, but they were lost long ago. The *Cilappatikāram* of the second century A.D. throws a flood of light on the music of the Tamils. Music in Tamil nomenclature is *icai*. An etymological interpretation is furnished by Aṭiyaıkkunallār in the closing lines of his elaborate commentary on Canto iii, l. 26.[2]

Those who practised music were styled *Pāṇar* and sometimes *Perumpāṇar*. These expressions occur frequently in the epic. There was a community, which included flutists and drummers, whose hereditary occupation was music.

Even a section of Brahmanas and Ambaṇavar took to

music as a profession. We get more interesting details of *paṉ* if we turn to Aṭiyārkkunallār's gloss to ll. 160-7 of Canto xiv. Four division of *paṉ* were distinguished. These are *pālai*, *Kuṟiñci*, *Marutam* and *Cevvaḻi*, suggesting at once a classification after the regions, in other words, specific melody types. The different musical pieces were brought under some classification or other. One classification was tenfold: *centuṟai*, *veṇṭuṟai*,

1 I am indebted to Sri P. Sambamurti, Lecturer in Music, University of Madras, for helping me in writing this appendix. I have also drawn upon two lectures on 'Ancient Tamil Music' by Swami Vipulananda, reported in The Hindu on 25 and 26 February 1936.

2 p. 105 of the Tamil edition.

perumtēvapaṇi, *ciṟutēvapaṇi*, *muttakam*, *peruvaṇṇam*, *aṟṟuvari*, *kaṉalvari*, *virimuraṇ*, and *talaipōkumanṭilam*,[1] Almost all these pieces of music are found referred to directly or indirectly in the epic. For example, *centuṟai* and *veṇṭurai* are implied in Canto iii, l. 29. *Perumtēva- paṇi* and *ciṟutēvapaṇi* are used in ordinary music as also in *naṭākat-tamiḻ* or dramatic compositions. While *perum- tēvapaṇi* is used in praise of Baladeva, *ciṟutēvapaṇi* was used in praise of caste *būtas*.[1] Examples of *aṟṟuvari* are the three songs on the Kāvēri in Canto vii. The whole of Canto vii is entitled 'Kāṉalvari'. This epic helps us to understand the nature of their fundamental scale, the resultant scales that they obtained by the modal shift of tonic, the *ragas* that they used,

the musical forms in vogue at that time, the instruments that they used in concerts, the types of dances cultivated and many other useful details relating to their art. 'Araṅkēṟṟukātai' and 'Ācciyarkuravai' are two cantos containing a mine of information relating to Tamil music.

THE CUDDHA-MELA

(FUNDAMENTAL SCALE) The ancient Tamils used a scale of twenty-two *srutis.* In other words they recognized and used as many as twenty- two notes in the *sthayi* or octave. This is exactly the number of notes that a refined ear can distinguish and use in a *saptaka.* The terms *alaku* (அலகு) and *matra* (மாத்திரை) are used as the equivalent of *sruti*. It was the scale of just intonation that they used. The notes of their foundation scale (*suddha-mēla*) had the following *sruti* values :

1. This is found in Cikaṇḍiyār's Icainuṇukkam. See text, p. 190.

2 Canto iii, l. 107.

4 4 3 2 4 3 2

The figure 4 is the equivalent of a *catussruti interval* (9/8, major tone); the figure 3 is the equivalent of a *trisruti interval* (10/9 minor tone); and the figure 2 is the equivalent of *dvisruti interval* (16/15, semitone). In the series: 4 4 3 2 4 3 2, each figure signifies the value of the interval between the note it stands for and its previous note. Thus in the *suddha* scale of the ancient Tamils there were three *catussruti intervals* (3 major tones), two *trisruti intervals* (2 minor tones) and two *dvisruti intervals* (2 semitones). There was a *Catussruti interval* between *ni* and *sa* (i.e. between *tāram* and *kural*), between *sa* and *ri* (i.e. between *kural* and *tuttam*), and between *ma* and *pa* (i.e. between *uḷai* and *iḷi*). There was a *trisruti interval* between *ri* and *ga* (i.e. between *tuttam* and *kaikkiḷai*) and between *pa* and *dha* (i.e. between *iḷi* and *viḷari*). The *dvisruti interval* existed between *ga* and *ma* (i.e. between *kaikkiḷai* and *uḷai*) and between *dha* and *ni* (i.e. between *viḷari* and *tāram*). That is expressed in modern terminology thus:

4	4	3	2	4	3	2
(ni) sa	ri	ga	ma	pa	dha	ni
$\frac{9}{8}$	$\frac{9}{8}$	$\frac{10}{9}$	$\frac{16}{15}$	$\frac{9}{8}$	$\frac{10}{9}$	$\frac{16}{15}$
catuśśruti interval	*catuśśruti* interval	*triśruti* interval	*dviśruti* interval	*catuśśruti* interval	*triśruti* interval	*dviśruti* interval

$$\frac{9}{8}\times\frac{9}{8}\times\frac{10}{9}\times\frac{16}{15}\times\frac{9}{8}\times\frac{10}{9}\times\frac{16}{15}=2$$

In other words, the frequencies of the notes figuring

in the *suddha* scale were:

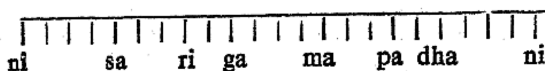
s	r	g	m	p	dha	n	s
1	$\frac{9}{8}$	$\frac{5}{4}$	$\frac{4}{3}$	$\frac{3}{2}$	$\frac{5}{3}$	$\frac{16}{9}$	2

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Representing these facts in a more visual manner, the

svarasthānas of the Tamil *suddha* scale will appear in the

following places:



This scale approximates to the modern *harikāmbhōji*

mēla and so it follows that the *suddha* scale of the ancient Tamils was *harikāmbhōji.*[1]

It is interesting to note that the *suddha* scale of Bharata had the following *sruti* values:

4 3 2 4 4 3 2

It is evident from this that the tonic note of the Tamil scale was the fourth note or the *madhyama* of the scale of Bharata. The fourth note of Bharata's scale when taken as the tonic results in *harikāmbhōji.* We may say that the *suddha* scale of the ancient Tamils was the *madhyama* *mūrchana* of *sadja grāma* just as the modern *sankarābharaṇa* is the *nisāda mūrchana* of *sadja grāma.* In other words, the *suddha* scale of Bharata is the *pañcama mūrchana* of the *suddha* scale. That *harikāmbhōji* is the *suddha-mēla* of the ancient Tamils is a fact not hitherto

noticed by many scholars. An analysis of *paṇs* reveals that a substantial number of them are in *rāgas* which are either derivatives of *harikāmbhōji* or are in *rāgas* which use a majority of *svaras* belonging to the *harikāmbhōji* scale. One merit of this scale is that the notes[2] figuring therein can be sounded pure and that one can stand on them for a length of

1 *Harikāmbhōji* takes the same notes as the major scale of European music except that B flat takes the place of B natural.

2 It is evident that these notes could not have belonged to one and the same octave.

time. There are other interesting facts in support of *harikāmbhōji*. The following *sloka* gives the names of the animals and birds whose cries approximated to the pitch of the *sapta svaras*:

ṣadjam mayūrō vadati gavastvrṣabha bhasinaḥ |
ajāvikantu gāndhāram krouncaḥ kraṇati madhyamam ||
puṣpa sādhāraṇē kālē pikaḥ kūjati pañcamam |
dhaivatam hrēṣatē vājī niṣādam bṛmhatē gajaḥ ||

Tamil books associate the following animals and birds with the *sapta svaras*: வண்டு (beetle), கிளி (parrot),

குதிரை (horse), யானை (elephant), குயில் (cuckoo), பசு (cow) and ஆடு (goat).

The fact that the notes of the *suddha* scale were compared to the cries of certain animals and birds is proof that our ancients had a conception of absolute pitch.

NAME OF THE SVARAS	SANSKRIT LIST	TAMIL LIST
Sa	Peacock	Beetle
Ri	Cow	Parrot
Ga	Goat	Horse
Ma	Heron	Elephant
Pa	Indian nightingale	Cuckoo
Dha	Horse	Cow
Ni	Elephant	Goat

A perusal of the above table reveals the fact that all except two are animals common to both lists. Since the *sadja grāma* is the *pañcama mūrchana* of the

Tamil *suddha* scale, it will be found that the lists of animals and birds also agree in a corresponding manner except that the

beetle and the parrot take the place of the heron and the cuckoo of the Sanskrit list. This list supplies more evidence to show that the *suddha* scale of the Tamils was the *harikāmbhōji* scale, viz. the *madhyama mūrchana* of the *sadja grāma*.

RĀGAS

By the modal shift of tonic, seven *mūrchanas* or scales were derived. They are named: *cempalai, paṭumalaip-pālai, cevvaḻippālai, arumpālai, kōṭippālai, viḷarippālai* and *mērcempālai*. The initial (tonic) notes of these

scales progress in the *avarōhaṇa krama* (downward series).

The use and application of the seven *pālais* are seen in

Canto iii, ii. 59-60 and ll. 70-1, and the commentary of

Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar thereon. It is said that when

Mātavi sang, she well observed the four *sātis*: *akani-*

laimarutam, *puṟanilaimarutam*, *arukiyaṉmarutam* and

perukiyaṉmarutam and had an eye to the threefold *iyak-*

kam which may be rendered high, low, and middle pitch

(Canto vii, ll. 35-44). The distinction of *alakus* or *srutis*

has been tabulated as follows:

Cempālai

... 4 4 3 2 4 3 2

Patumalaippālai ... 2 4 4 3

2 4 3

Cevvaḻippālai ... 3 2

4 4 3 2 4

Arumpālai ... 4 3 2 4

4 3 2

Kōṭippālai ... 2 4 3

2 4 4 3

Viḷarippālai ... 3 2 4 3

2 4 4

Mēṟcempālai ... 4 3 2 4

3 2 4

Four main *pālais* are referred to which correspond to derivative *grāmas*, and fresh scales were derived by the process of modal shift of tonic in each case. *Campūrṇa rāgas* (heptatonic scales) were called *paṇ* (பண்) and *varja rāgas* (transilient scales)

tiṟam (திறம்).

நிறைந்த நரம்பு நிகழும் பண்ணெனல்
குறைந்த நரம்பு திறமெனக் கொள்க.

Tiṟam is also used in the sense of an *auṭava rāga* (pentatonic scale). *Paṇṇiaṟṟiram* signified a *sodara rāga* (hexatonic scale) and *tiṟattiṟam* signified a *svarantara rāga* (a scale with four notes).

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Music was always associated with dancing in ancient times. It is no wonder therefore that all the information we are given about ancient Tamil music is in connexion with the dances of Mātavi and the group dance recounted in a later canto of the *Cilappatikaram*. The treatment of music as a separate art, i.e. independent of its relation to

dancing, is found only in later works.

A remarkable feature of the education of an actress, which began in her fifth year, was a thorough training in dancing and music. Among other things the young girl was trained to sing songs composed in foreign languages and to play on the *yāḻ*, the drum, and the flute. In addition to the drummer, lute player and flutist, there was the musician of honour or chief musician, and a composer of songs who improvised pieces suitable to all occasions. This bears great testimony to the creative mind of the composer. From the fact that a separate music master is mentioned we have to assume that this composer may or may not have been a musician himself, for it is said that verses composed by him were set to music by the musician.

There is an elaborate description of the harpist and the harp in ll. 70-94 of

'Araṅkēṟṟukātai'. The passage in question has been rendered difficult of correct interpretation by Aṭiyārkkunallār's not commenting on these lines except to give a few short notes, most of which are copied from the

commentary of Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar. But with the materials available, it seems fairly certain that *cakōṭayaḻ* was the kind of harp generally used on the stage by a debutante. It had fourteen major strings. The flute usually preceded the harp. In other words the song was started by the flutist and followed by the harpist. Then there was the beating of the *maddalam*, the *kuṭamuḻavu* and the *idakkai*, one following the other. *Idakkai* was a musical instrument used for keeping time. Sometimes one and the same song was played on the harp and the flute at one and the same time.

Thus we see that instruments in those times were used for accompaniments.

The three great instru- ments, viz. *viṇa* *vēṇu* and *mirudangam*, have their parallels in the *yāḻ*, *kuḻal* and *maddalam* of the Tamils. Since the range of the human voice was three octaves the compass of the stringed and wind instruments used for accompaniments was also of the same range. The three octaves were respectively called the *mandavisai* (lower octave or the *mandra sthāyi*), *samanisai* (middle octave or the *madhya sthāyi*) and *vallisai* (higher octave or the *tāra sthāyi*). The strings of the *yāḻ* were tuned to notes of absolute pitch and the instrument itself was played on open strings. It is evident that in addition to metallic strings of different varieties and thickness and density, gut must also have been used. Conclusions based solely on the lengths of the strings of the *yāḻ* in the absence of data relating to their nature, cross section, and density must necessarily be

incorrect. The strings of the *yāḻ* were named after the notes to which they were tuned. This facilitated the playing of different *rāgas* by the modal shift of tonic. In the absence of facilities for the introduction of *gāmakas*, we have to conclude that the *yāḻ* produced only pure notes. The basic melody

was played by the

yāḻ player and the melody was adorned by *gāmakas* from the flute which also repeated the melody in the higher octave. In a medallion from the Amarāvati sculpture preserved in the archaeological gallery of the Madras Government Museum we see a woman playing the *yāḻ*, indicating that the instrument was very popular dur- ing the time of the *Cilappatikaram* and the centuries preceding it.

Varieties of Yāḻ. Mention has already been made of the *cakōṭayāḻ* which was

usually a stage instrument. Among other kinds referred to are the *pēriyāḻ* as opposed to *ciriyāḻ*. The first was a large harp consisting of twenty-one strings while the second was a small harp with seven strings. Among the different varieties of *yāḻ*, these two seem to be very ancient. But in the early centuries of the Christian era we find reference to *makara yāḻ* distinguished by seventeen strings and *cakōṭayāḻ* with fourteen strings. These *yāḻs* or harps were early in use. Here and there we meet with descriptions of them and of how they were sometimes inlaid with gems and kept in decorated cases.

In other Caṅkam classics, like the *Poruṉararruppaṭai*, *Malaipaṭuka- ṭam* and *Kallāṭam*, we find descriptions of *yāḻ*. One gathers from all these that the *pēriyāḻ* was a pretty instru- ment and was portable. Its twenty-one strings represent-
ed the three *sthāyis* of seven notes each.

The *yāḻ* and the *viṇa* are not identical instruments. The former had no frets. The term *viṇa* has been used by some writers to mean stringed instruments generally but latterly it has come to denote a stringed instrument with frets. Māṇikkavācakar says: 'இன்னிசை வீணையர் யாழினர் ஒருபால்' and so it is clear that there were two distinct instruments. The *yaḻ* was a majestic and beautiful

instrument and must have produced impressive and melo- dious music. It became obsolete some eight centuries ago. It ceased to be in use the moment the fretted *viṇa* with its great musical possibilities appeared on the firma- ment of South Indian music.

The instrumentalists of those days seem to have reach- ed a high standard of playing. Their

finger technique, the skill with which they displayed the *ghana naya bhavas*, the wonderful command that they possessed over their instruments and the artistic finish of their performances are all echoed in the *Cilappatikaram*. The performers had their allotted seats on the stage.

PARALLEL IDEAS

There are many paralled ideas in the ancient works on music in Tamil and Sanskrit. The similarities in the values of the *sruti* intervals and the names of animals and birds whose cries approximated to the seven notes have already been referred to.

Ni was the first note in the *yaḻ* and it was to this same note that the string of the *viṇa* was

tuned in ancient times. The classifications of *svaras* into *vadi*, *samvadi*, *anuvadi* and *vivadi* have their correspondence in *iṇai* (இணை), *kiḷai* (கிளை), *naṭpu* (நட்பு), and *pakai* (பகை) notes.

It is a pity that the beautiful musical system of the ancient Tamils is now lost. Even in the times of Aṭiyārkkunallār it was quite forgotten. Some of the ancient *paṇs* are however still used in the recitals of the *Tevaram* hymns.

APPENDIX IV

THE PATTIṈI CULT THROUGH THE AGES

IN *Ceylon*, more than in India, the Pattiṉi cult has continued for a long time. In the march of years many legends have grown round the origin and career of Kaṇ- ṇaki, and the Sinhalese tradition is very different from what obtains in South India. In Ceylon Pattiṉi has been regarded as Durgā with as many as eight Kāḷis waiting in attendance on her. She causes and cures epidemics like smallpox, and so prayers are offered at her shrine.[1] One mode of prayer was the worship of the anklet symbol (*cilampu*) which was placed in a decorated vessel with the figure of a cobra moulded on it. There are works in Sinhalese entitled *Calampa Kathava* and *Pattiṉi Pidima* dealing with the career of Pattiṉi and the ritual of offering prayers to her.[2] The cult has become so popular that in one district alone, Jaffna, there are as many as a dozen temples to Pattiṉi. Many miraculous deeds are

attributed to her. It is not possible nor necessary to give all details concerning the cult in an appendix like this. One such miraculous deed was that when she planted her foot on a rock, there gushed forth a fountain of water.

H. Parker, the author of *Ancient Ceylon*, refers to this cult in more than one place. In the last portions of his book he records a tradition that Kaṇṇaki was reborn a demoness and entered Ceylon with two sons of the Pāṇṭyan king, notwithstanding the stout opposition from the four guardian deities of the island. We are told that this

1 H. Parker, Ancient Ceylon, pp. 151, 161.

2 Cey. Ant., Vol. I, No. 2. p. 128.

tradition has given rise to what is known as

the Fire- Walking Ceremony conducted every year in her honour.[1]

Still another interesting story current in certain parts of Ceylon is that Kaṉṉaki was a daughter of the Pāṇṭyaṉ King. Astrologers predicted that she would be the ruin of the Pāṇṭyaṉ kingdom. The King who believed this put his daughter in a box and left it afloat on a river. Two members of the Vaiśya caste, who were merchants by profession, noticed this box and had it rescued. The names of these merchants were Maṉakkar and Mācattar. The former adopted her as his daughter and the latter's son married her in course of time.[2] This tradition has special interest for us in South India as the Kōvalaṉ drama is still shown on the stage and very popularly attended. The Tamil dramatic representation has more or less adopted this Ceylonese tradition in its delineation of the early life of Kōvalaṉ and Kaṉṉaki.

This now leads us to inquire into the different turns which the epic episode of Kaṇṇakī has taken in South India.[3] One is the association of this Pattiṇi cult with the Draupadi Ammaṉ festival, Draupadi being the chaste queen of the five Pāṇṭava brothers. Tradition affirms that she is one of the five *kanyas* whose names are daily remembered so as to keep the torchlight of morality even burning throughout the length and breadth of this land. Tamil tradition refers to Draupadi as *aḻiyata pattiṇi*, the eternal Pattiṇi or an incarnation of chastity. Later tradition has confounded the Kaṇṇaki cult with the Draupadi cult, and

1 Parker, op. cit., pp. 632-3.

2 Cey. Ant., Vol. VIII, No. 3. p. 252.

3 See M. Raghava Aiyangar's Cēran Ceṅkuṭṭuvan,

4: Āraiyccitokuti, pp. 238-40.

the whole thing has been treated as the Pattiṇi cult in general. Draupadiyammaṉ Utsavam is a popular festival in Tamil India today, and in some places this is connected with a fire-walking ceremony.

That the Pattiṇi cult was once prevalent throughout South India is seen from the fact that even to the present day festivals in her honour are celebrated in a village on the outskirts of the town of Negapatam (Tanjore District) underneath a tree; in the region of Āṟṟūr (Madura District); and among the primitive Toda tribes in the Nilgiris. Still more interesting is the story contained in a popular book entitled *Kovalankatai* attributed to a certain Pukaḻentiyar. This is probably a composition of 300 or 400 years ago. There is a similar version in a manuscript in

the Malayaḷa country, showing some agreement with the *Kovalankatai*. It is said that the Bhagavati worshipped in Chenganūr or Tricchenkaṇūr in Malabar was none other than *Kaṇṇakitēvi*, who took the role of a Kāḷi, popularly known as Durgātēvi, and finally settled in Tiruvoṟṟiyūr, the northern limit of the city of Madras. She became known there as Vaṭṭapuriyamman. There is a separate shrine to the deity in the northern *prakara* of the famous Tiruvoṟṟiyūr temple, and every year a festival is held in her honour lasting for fifteen days. Local tradition affirms that in ancient days a goldsmith was regularly offered to this deity in connexion with this festival. But once a goldsmith poet praised the goddess in suitable terms and extracted a promise that an animal would thereafter be substituted. One conspicuous feature of this festival is that on the last day, the special *pandal* erected for the sacrifice is fired, as a symbolical representation of the burning down of Madura city by Kaṇṇaki. This only demonstrates how the cult spread from one part of the land to the other, from Malabar to Coromandel.

Much more interesting is the tradition by which the Bhagavati enshrined at Cranganore goes by the name of Orraimulaicci, the goddess with one breast. How and when this metamorphosis of the Pattini cult into the Bhagavati and Kaḷi cult of a demoness took place, it is difficult to say at this distance of time. Though the text of the *Cilappatikaram* does not give us any hint on this point, yet by the time of Arumpatavuraiyāciriyar, this transformation had become an accomplished fact. He says in one place that Kannaki was born as Durgā. This is due to the fact, to hazard a guess, that as Kaḷi worship was popular in the Tamil land from the earliest times, the Pattini cult had in course of time been intimately associated with it.

Whatever may have been the later developments of the cult, it is certain that immeditely following the foundation of the first shrine to Pattinidēvi by Ceṅkuṭṭuvan in the second century A.D., it was introduced into countries outside the Tamilnāṭu, like, Ceylon and Malva, and became a universal cult not only in South India and Ceylon but also in some parts of the Deccan.[1]

1 Yet another distorted version of the story is found in M. Frere's *Old Deccan Days* (published in 1868 by John Murray, London) in a tale called 'Chandra's Vengeance'. Kōvalaṉ is called Koila, and Kaṇṇaki is Chandra. The story goes that Koila, son of a sowkar, was captivated by a dancing-girl called Moulee and had won the garland by which he became her husband. After dire circumstances, Koila and his wife reached Madura where an old milk-seller offered them hospitality. A jeweller of that place who had deprived the Rani of a bangle, accused Koila of stealing it and had him cut in twain. Chandra set fire to the city although the old milk-seller advised her to spare the *purwari* (residences of low castes). Then she sewed the two halves of the dead body and prayed to Śiva to give it life. Koila was resurrected and returned home with Chandra. (This is a verson of the story told to Frere in Goa by an *ayah*. The *ayah* herself had heard it from her grandparents who were living in Calicut.)

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